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ONE DOLLAR



SPECIAL HUNTING ISSUE

Editor's Page

You may not understand this, you who do not hunt. But, it is Opening Day again, and we would, for once, like you to understand. Because, undoubtedly, you will see us in the fields, sitting on our camouflaged stools staring into the sky, as you whiz past in your cars, and you'll hear the shots that disrupt the calm of your afternoons. And you'll sigh and wish it were February, because you know it's only going to get worse come November when the deer hunters start moving in the woods and it's not safe for man or beast in the wilderness. And that's when we wish we could share with you what it means to us, so that you would not simply tolerate, but so that you would understand.

I can see how those who do not hunt have trouble with our obsession with guns, dogs, and cornfields come September. Because, hunting has no place in a modern world of concrete and glass, of modular offices and coffee breaks. It has no place in a world of dogs on leashes, investment banking and triathlons. It is not comfortable in the 80s.

So, maybe that's why we stay to ourselves come September. It's too hard to think of things to say to those who don't comprehend; who can't feel what we feel. Still, I find myself shaking off a sadness when I fumble for words with dear friends who tolerate and condone, but don't understand. Because they care, they rationalize our passion with the tired old arguments of the need to hunt to keep wildlife populations healthy. But, that is not *why* we hunt. So, although our friends may nod their heads and wish us well in the field; still, they do not understand.

For those of us whose lives begin again in September of every year, everything else in our world follows the hunt. The ability to be still, to see, to listen. To be quiet without being restless, to wait without boredom, to watch without speaking. Still, tell me how to explain to others why the papers on my desk dissolve into cut corn-



fields, dusty roads and darting birds every afternoon past 12 after Opening Day. Or, why it is so hard to contain the grins, the smiles, and the long looks at the shotgun in the corner this time of year. And help me explain the reasons for the silly, concocted excuses I spend hours over, just to get a few precious afternoons off to stand in the heat and the gnats with my Brittany, staring up at empty skies across the field.

How do you explain the wonder of arriving on a field at sunrise, trying to control the white puffs of your whis-pers in the frost, while scanning tree-lines, squinting for the slightest movement? How do you share your memories of fallen logs and the lichens on tree bark that you were leaning against when a blur of feathers burst from a

pine thicket close by, especially when you come home to a crowded house looking for all the world like a Cuban refugee, with mud and blood on your pants and feathers sticking out from your pockets? How do you explain that contradiction inherent in the wildness you just came from, to one who has spent the day enclosed in electricity, paying bills, mowing the lawn, or cleaning out the garage? Do you simply start right in on how much you learned that afternoon while seated in the mud, cramped in between two cornrows, staring out into the muggy drizzle of a September afternoon? Where are the words to make people *feel* how, in that afternoon of missed birds and miscalculations, you came ever so much closer to understanding the smallness of man?

Last year (do you remember?) it was raining on Opening Day. I hunted with a cousin of mine and his young son, a boy who had never been afield. His Dad's jacket was much too big for him, the sleeves hanging over his hands, and I walked over to him, pushing up his sleeves so that he could hold a gun steady. I showed him how to stand and shoot and never point his gun barrel in an unsafe direction. It was raining and I'm wondering if he's aching to go hunting again this year, and if he, too, finds his schoolwork reduced to cloudy skies with darts of gray doves and mud on his boots. And, I wonder if his father will take him more places this year than one hunt on a rainy day. Because we who are weak of spirit need more than one day in the field to set the world right.

The rest of you may not understand that. Perhaps you have more strength of spirit; perhaps you are more sure of your place on this Earth than we are. And so you may not comprehend. But, we ask you not to condemn. Rather, say: "There are some things we do not understand." And we will continue to hope that someday we will be more able to explain.

Special Hunting Section

The 1988 Virginia Hunter's Guide provides where-to-go information, license and permit requirements, and last season's statewide harvest information. Also included in this special section is the 1988 hunting season forecast.

Kicking Up Cottontails

by Bruce Ingram

Here are the basics of rabbit hunting—guaranteed to make you want to buy a couple beagles and head for the nearest briar patch.

Bust 'em up, or leave 'em be?

by Irv Kenyon

Hunters will do just about anything to bring back the bobwhite. But it's better to dispel the age-old remedies designed to encourage production, and rely instead on good sound wildlife management.



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by Steve Ausband

One of the most rewarding things about freelance writing is the mail one gets. I have received recipes, advice, opinions, and anecdotes from readers. Most of the letters are friendly, a very few are not-so-friendly, but all are welcome. It always impresses me when someone takes the time and effort to write in response to something he or she has seen in a magazine. I recently got an interesting letter from a woman who was concerned about a hunting article I had recently written. She loved animals, she said, and made it plain that she didn't approve of hunting. She controlled her indignation fairly well in the letter, and only told me twice that I was "mentally sick" for wanting to kill things. The letter was unsigned because, as the writer explained, she had "heard it all before" and certainly didn't want to hear from me.

I appreciate the woman's concern and the time she took to write. I doubt I can do much to dissuade her from her opinion of my bloodthirstiness, as her mind seems pretty well made up. But her letter gave me an opportunity to think about what I, as a hunter and a fisherman and a man who loves the outdoors, stand for. Actually, I believe that hunters and nonhunters who love the outdoors often believe in very similar values. It is how we put our beliefs into action, of course, that matters.

Believing in a thing is never enough; only acting on our beliefs can make us what we want to become. No, that's not original with me. I stole it from Jean Paul Sartre, and it wasn't entirely original with him, either. He gave it a nice term, though. He called that kind of action "authentic." With that in mind, let us examine our positions and see which of us is the more authentic.

You sign yourself "an animal lover." I might describe myself as a lover of nature. I think both of us mean we love natural scenes, the outdoors—forests, mountain ranges, swamplands, rivers—and that we feel that our natu-

Taking A Stand



For The Sportsman

Hunters and fishermen often find themselves unprepared for attacks against their sports. Steven Ausband humbles the ignorant with the simple words of a sportsman.

photo by Gregory Scott

ral heritage is important and beautiful. I know both of us would feel a great sense of loss if the deer and squirrels and quail were to disappear, and we would also feel a loss if rattlesnakes, white-footed mice, groundhogs, and red-tailed hawks were to vanish, for if we love the wilderness, we must cherish these things too. So, what do we do about our passions? I can only speak for myself.

I hunt and fish, among other things. I put myself outdoors as often as I can. I see as many sunrises and sunsets in the woods and on the water as it is possible for a man who has to work for a living to see. I study nature directly, by observation, as well as through books, and I learn a little more every time I go out. The more I know, the more I wonder and stand amazed, and the more I want to know.

Sometimes I take a camera and try to record a little of what I experience, knowing that no camera can record it all, just as no words can recall it all. Once I knelt in half-frozen mud in head-high grass in a swamp bigger than most large cities, and I watched with my mouth wide open in the growing dark as wild tundra swans came in by twos and threes and then by dozens and finally by scores at a time, until the whole open water was full of huge white birds and the air was full of the sound of their wings and of their bodies splashing into the dark water, and of their strange, wild calling. I left the swamp and didn't say anything to my companions on the way back to camp, and I never wrote about it or even talked much about it afterwards because I never found words that could touch more than a little of all that beauty and that wildness. You have, as they say, to have been there.

Sometimes I carry along a rod and reel or a bow or a gun, and if I take a fish or an animal, then I bring it home with me and eat it. The eating is a part of the wildness too. I cannot fool myself into thinking that I use the woods as a substitute for going to the



supermarket. What I bring home from the woods or the water is too precious to be compared to anything I could buy. It is a part of the wildness, and I know that the simplest meal of fish or game is a ritual. I would share a beefsteak with a starving man I despised, but I would not want to give a game animal I had killed to someone I deemed unworthy. It would be like gargling with the communion wine.

But, in order to take something away from the wilderness, I have to put something back into it. If I am to be more than a neutral force, a nonentity who is neither positive nor negative, I must put more in than I take away. That's not original with me either; it's a solid principle of citizenship, of economics, and of wildlife management. I must have a way to repay my great debt—not just for the occasional deer or squirrel or duck, not for a few bass, but for the sunrises and sunsets too, for the hours in blinds or tree stands, waiting and hoping, and for the colors of leaves and the smell of humus and the sound of wings and the feel of cold air over the water. For the swans. For wildness.

So let's see what I have to give. No more than most like me, I'm afraid. Less than some. I can count most of it, at least most of the tangible things, in a paragraph.

This year was typical. I bought one state resident license for hunting and fishing, and one set of nonresident tags, along with big game stamps and primitive weapons permits for both Virginia and North Carolina. The total was only a little over a hundred bucks. There was a federal duck stamp (another 10 dollars), and some money I sent to Ducks Unlimited, the Izaak Walton League of America, The Nature Conservancy, and the state office of the Wildlife Federation. Some of the money was in the form of membership fees, but some of it was extra, because the organizations had expensive and important projects going on, and people like me were the ones they counted on to help them. I spent a tad more than three hundred dollars improving my little 48-acre farm for wildlife, and a few dollars—no more than fifty, I imagine—helping a couple



of neighbors plant feeder strips and sow unused land with mixed grains for small animals and birds. (I'll not count the time I spent on the tractor, dragging a disk or a breaking plow. I'll not count other intangibles either—people I have talked to about conservation, kids I have helped take hunting or fishing so that they would grow up believing wilderness was important enough to love and save. I don't know how to count that or how to put a price on it.) A significant portion of every dollar I spent on ammunition and firearms went to help preserve wildlife. Still, I suppose my entire tangible contribution amounts to only a little over six hundred dollars for the

year.

I know the money and the efforts were well spent. The number of quail on my place has more than doubled since I bought it a little over a year ago, and both small game and deer are numerous and healthy. The rabbits are coming back, I've seen fox tracks, and songbirds and other species are abundant.

The state hunting and fishing license fees were the best investment though; for they go to help finance wildlife management programs, land acquisitions, research, habitat restoration, and to pay such folks as wildlife biologists, enforcement officers, and educators.



The true sportsman tries to give something back for beauty he is privileged to be a part of in the field. (Canada geese; photo by Rob Simpson.)

I spend a little time every year at the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge in eastern North Carolina, and I am impressed with what my contribution to the federal duck stamp program and The Nature Conservancy is doing there. The Nature Conservancy is helping administer the tremendous, 118,000-acre wilderness of woods and swamps and waterways. And, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists recently reintroduced red wolves on the refuge. I'm glad to have been a part of that restoration program.

When I was a child growing up not far from where I live now, there were no deer in this area. Today, the deer are more plentiful than they have been

since the Colonial Period. The beautiful, brilliantly colored wood ducks were just about gone when I was a kid, and now they are among our most plentiful waterfowl. I never saw a wild turkey strutting around in a grove of hardwoods until I was grown, but my family and I see them occasionally on our farm, which almost straddles the Virginia-North Carolina border not far from Danville. Hawks and owls and even beavers were scarce, and the alligators left in eastern North Carolina were disappearing both from poaching and from habitat destruction. They're all back now, all these wild things. And they're back mainly because nature lovers who hunt and

fish and cherish wildness were willing to foot the bill, through hunting and fishing license fees and excise taxes on sporting equipment and ammunition and hard work for their recovery. That's not self-congratulatory. We need to do more. But it's a darned good beginning, and I think it's authentic.

Now, what have you done? I don't mean to question your sincerity or your goodness of heart. I would ask your help in preserving what I love. But if you have spent two dollars on a bumper sticker that says "I brake for animals," and if you have thereby convinced yourself that you have done your part, I say you are a phoney. But surely you have done more, and surely you want to work for a cause in which you believe.

If you are looking for a way to do even more, may I suggest that you support as many conservation agencies as you can, as generously as you can? Pick any you like—The Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy, The Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, even your local fish and game department. They all need your help.

May I further suggest that you become actively and vociferously involved whenever private, state, or federal agencies threaten wildlife habitat? You get indignant about a farmer and a hunter who, in effect, *raises* deer on his land and then harvests one, but you patronize a new shopping mall built on what was once a hundred acres of hardwood forest. Perhaps a coalition of non-hunting members of conservation agencies *and* concerned hunters and fishermen will be the only force in this country strong enough to prevent the eventual draining, channelizing, deforesting, and paving of the American wilderness. You might consider buying a hunting and fishing license; I can promise you the money will be spent to increase habitat and wildlife populations.

You'll like doing all this, I promise, and everything you do will count for something. You'll be authentic. □

Steve Ausband is the chairman of the English Department of Averett College in Danville, and is a frequent contributor to Virginia Wildlife.

KICKING UP COTTONTAILS

Here are the basics of rabbit hunting—guaranteed to make you want to buy a couple beagles and head for the nearest briar patch.



Cottontail rabbit; photo by Lloyd Hill.

by Bruce Ingram

Rabbit hunting in Virginia is a whole lot of maybes, and only one unarguable point. Vernon Beacham, a rabbit hunter from Craig County dwells on the one constant quality of his favorite pastime.

"Rabbit hunting is a very, very special thing. The most interesting part to me is having a chance to run my dogs in pursuit of game. When I'm out in the field, it's like a whole separate world—just my dogs, the rabbits, and me."

A rabbit hunter just wouldn't be complete without a beagle by his (or her) side; photo by Steve and Karl Maslowski.





And for Beacham, as with most rabbit hunters, the sport begins with a beagle.

"The ideal rabbit dog should have two traits," says Beacham. "The first thing that dog should have is a high level of intensity and a desire to hunt. But, it's really hard to teach a dog those things; he just has to have them inside."

Once you figure out you've got a good dog, then you go about refining his instincts and using his ability to your best advantage.

"You try to determine whether he'll be better as a jump dog or a chase dog," says Beacham. Jump dogs like to root around in the brush and get those bunnies up and running. And chase dogs have to have speed, but not too much of it.

"That's why I prefer a 13-inch (tall) beagle," continues Beacham. "A 15-inch is too much dog—they push a bunny and make it go too fast. Then, after a while, the rabbit will look for a groundhog hole to go down. With a really fast dog, you might only get one shot. A slower, 13-inch beagle gives me more opportunities and makes my job so much easier."

Of course, a bunny beagle has to be trained before he can be taken afield. Beacham says he begins training his dogs when they are three or four months old. A good first step is to get them used to the smell of cottontails by giving them a rabbit hide to sniff. Other factors also come into play.

"It's very important to develop a good relationship with a dog when he's young," relates Beacham. "Please remember that he's only a puppy and that you've got to be patient. Get the dog adjusted to being around you."

Some rabbit hunters don't believe in working puppies with experienced dogs. These sportsmen believe that a young hound will get discouraged if he can't keep up with his veteran counterparts. Others prefer to let their young beagles run with an experienced pack of hounds and learn as they go. Beacham takes the latter position with a slight modification.

"I like to put a young beagle with experienced dogs that are slow workers," he says. "That way, the pup will

have a chance to get in on the action.

"If the pup starts to trail a rabbit, I give him plenty of positive reinforcement. If he's conscious of your positive emotional level, he'll want to please you. Beagles are free spirits, but they truly want to please you. After that first successful hunt, give the dog a biscuit, some stroking, and plenty of praise. After a while, he'll live to work with you."

Like many hunters who pursue a particular species with great gusto, Beacham has tremendous respect for his quarry.

"A rabbit has nerves of steel. An experienced bunny can hold so tight in cover that it's amazing. I could jump up and down on a brushpile for ten minutes and nothing would happen sometimes. A rabbit seems to understand that I'm not coming in after him. An old bunny isn't spooked by human scent either."

"A rabbit also knows when it's got a four-legged animal nearby," continues Beacham. "It knows when the noises are coming from down low and it knows when it's time to move either to escape from a fox or from a dog."

One of the biggest "maybes" of cottontail hunting involves where to find these elusive creatures. Beacham believes that groundhogs are a key to locating Brer Rabbit. Bunnies require sanctuaries from their many enemies and an abandoned woodchuck burrow not only gives them protection from predators but also from the elements.

It's also smart to prowl the edges of woods—especially where there are blackberry, raspberry, dewberry and other thorny vines which provide both food and cover. Rabbits have a passion for winter rye, clover, soybeans, and various kinds of wild grasses, too. Toss those ingredients into a field with some cedar trees, a few rock and brush piles, some downed evergreens, and a hedgerow or two and you're very likely to come across cottontails.

The best way to train a young beagle puppy on rabbits is to take him out into the field with an older, experienced dog; photo by Steve and Karl Maslowski.





Abandoned apple orchards, fence rows, pine thickets, honeysuckle patches, and areas where an overgrown field dissolves into a cultivated one are other excellent "rabitats."

One place where you won't find rabbits are in fields which have been overgrazed. "Clean" farms are also unlikely to yield game.

If finding rabbits can sometimes be a puzzling proposition, so can the question of which type of gun is best to hunt them. Though most sportsmen use scatterguns for cottontails, that's just about the only point there is of agreement.

A prime sticking point is which type of choke is best, and that may depend on the habitat being hunted. For brush and heavy cover, improved cylinder is often favored, with modified choke getting the nod for open woods and fields. Beacham says that some outdoorsmen even use a skeet bore in particularly dense cover and that a full choke comes in handy when the bunnies are 35 to 40 yards distant.

There is also disagreement about which type of shotgun is best. Many veteran hunters swear by the double barrel that has improved cylinder and modified chokes. Autoloaders (in various chokes depending on the habitat) seem to be gaining in popularity, however, because they give the hunter a third shot and because the modern models typically have less recoil than double barrels.

Shot size can range from No. 4's to No. 7½'s, with No. 6's perhaps being the most popular—though there can be great difference of opinion even in this area, depending on individual experience.

All of the ifs, buts, and maybes of Old Dominion rabbit hunting become insignificant, though, once the hunter, the dogs and the rabbits come together in the field. Vernon Beacham knows all about that experience.

"You can tell when those beagles are on a trail," he marvels. "They start cooking, then they begin to sing, and then that bunny pops up. It's really something." □

Bruce Ingram is the Virginia editor for Outdoor Life magazine and a frequent contributor to Virginia Wildlife.

Bust 'em up, or

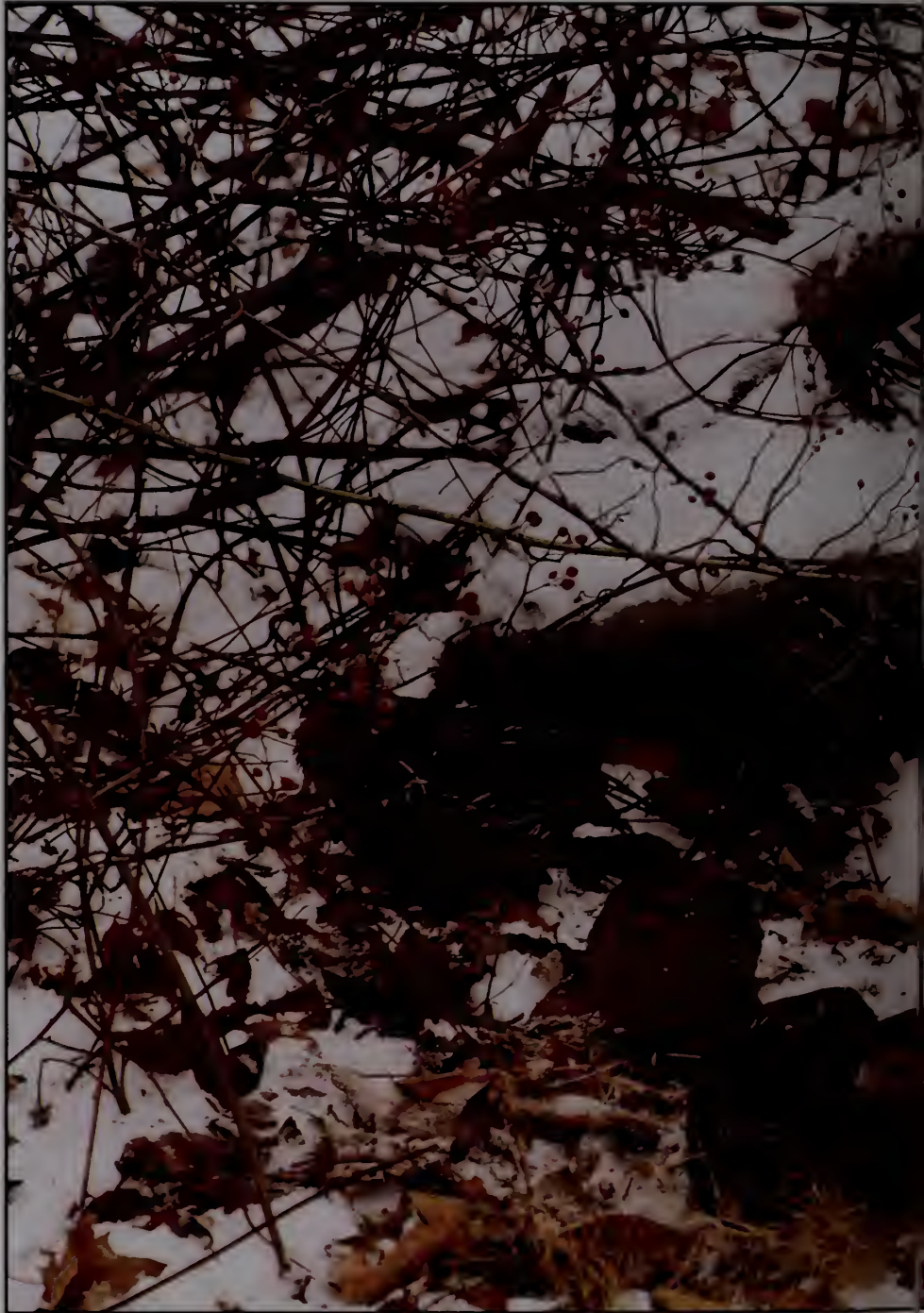
Hunters will do just about anything to bring back the bobwhite. But it's better to dispel the age-old remedies designed to encourage production, and rely instead on good sound wildlife management.

by Irv Kenyon

Most quail hunters have heard that flushing and shooting at a covey of birds sometime during the season is actually in the best interest of the bobwhite. The "shoot 'em up" practice, it is believed, will encourage covey breakup come spring, reduce the likelihood of inbreeding, and mean additional coveys the following year.

According to the theory, to allow a covey to pass the hunting season unmolested encourages its members to become such homebodies that they won't think of leaving the security and companionship of their brethern when the breeding season arrives. Not only will coveys not separate, but pairing off with a coveymate, it is reasoned, would simply have little appeal.

It is interesting that the fear of inbreeding is sometimes found among the very same people who hunt quail over dogs that do remarkably well, yet often come from parents (those of the dogs, of course) with strikingly similar bloodlines. Be that as it may, Herbert Stoddard and others since have pointed out that except where extremely isolated, quail populations become well shuffled during the course of the year. This occurs naturally. Thus, close inbreeding is often only a remote possibility. And if kinfolds in the covey should pair off, as surely sometimes happens, so what? If the breeding stock is strong, in all likelihood their offspring will be likewise. As for undesirables in the population, Mother Nature deals with these quickly and severely. Any lack of sound genes,



leave 'em be?

A winter covey of bobwhites.



photos by Steve Maslowski

survival instincts, or a healthy constitution will take its toll before there is a opportunity to pass these shortcomings along to another generation.

Somehow, woven together with the concern for inbreeding, there is also the concern that coveys not previously separated will not break up and that no pairing or breeding will take place in the spring. Additionally, though not well explained, it is sometimes suggested that survivors of a hunted covey will have an increased inclination to seek a mate. Perhaps it is reasoned, having avoided a load of number "eights" once or twice during the hunting season, the bobwhite realizes just how short life might be, hence, at the first opportunity will play the mating game with reckless abandon.

Actually, this belief is contrary to what often happens. Some pair bonds *are* formed within the covey as spring approaches. Since the very nature of the bobwhite is to keep company with others of its kind, a covey breakup which depended on individuals going their separate ways might be a slow process indeed. On the other hand, secure in the company of each other and with family planning in mind, pairs already formed are much more likely to make their exit with warmer weather and longer days. Unpaired birds will seek a mate elsewhere. Occasionally, because of cooler weather, coveys may remain together later than usual, but eventually these, too, will disperse in the normal fashion.

Thus, with no effort to replenish its stock, the fate of such a covey is to grow old and disappear. Perhaps most feared by advocates of the theory is that if a courtship within the covey should occur, it would likely result in a brood of inbred chicks.

The belief that winter coveys should be scattered by hunting was popular over 60 years ago when Herbert Stoddard conducted his landmark bobwhite investigations. The first to coin the phrase, "the shoot 'em up theory," Stoddard found that, weighed against far more sound knowledge of the bobwhite's habits, the theory was woefully lacking. In conclusions reached then and which appear to apply equally today, he found that hunting and the harvest of quail within safe limits can be well justified without resorting to "... such far-fetched propaganda as the 'shoot 'em up' fallacy."

Over the years, efforts to justify "shooting 'em up" have stemmed largely from the fear for inbreeding and the array of undesirable consequences this might bring. Inbreeding has been blamed for the decline in quail numbers and is sometimes thought to bring about some unfavorable characteristics in bobwhite behavior. Inbreeding is sometimes thought to be the cause of quail running in front of the dogs, flushing wildly, or flying into the woods. To avoid inbreeding, it is believed coveys should be disturbed, since once kicked from their hiding place, the birds will flee in all directions, and take up with other quail which are totally unrelated.

Despite the scarcity of evidence for its support, the theory persists. One must wonder why. A ploy to encourage landowners to allow hunting? This reason cannot be overlooked, since it may add to the idea's appeal, and account for its longevity. And whether or not we subscribe to the theory, probably few of us would turn down this particular benefit if opportunity happened to knock. While I have never used this line of persuasion to get permission to hunt; admittedly, neither did I argue with the owner of some good bird hunting territory I once knew who happened to believe in



It is a common misconception that late winter coveys of bobwhites should be hunted in order to insure a healthy population and good breeding success the following year. Although regulated hunting does no harm to bobwhite populations, habitat is the key to quail abundance.

the "shoot 'em up" idea.

The contention that shooting some of this year's quail crop will increase future bobwhite numbers is often discussed around the corner store. Hearing this, I'm always reminded of another landowner's view of this theory. Ernest Yowell was a longtime and colorful resident of Madison County. He generally welcomed hunting except when it came to "his" quail. Ernest's farm and protected quail population had long been a source of temptation to local hunters. Therefore, it was no surprise when one day several years ago, Ernest was approached with one of many requests to hunt. "Mr. Yowell, you've got to hunt quail; shoot into 'em; kill some birds. That way you'll have even more next year," the hunter

told him. "Well," replied Ernest, knowing the man talking had a reputation for taking his "fair share" of quail where he'd found them in the past, "if what you say is true, seems to me you'd better go back to where you bird hunted last year. There oughta be just hells of 'em." Ernest's logic was indisputable and the conversation turned elsewhere.

Undoubtedly, though, sportsmen will always look for new evidence to support their old theories rather than discard them, and it's a fact about us that applies to anything that has some age on it, be it guns, dogs, or a favorite hunting coat. Consequently, the recent evidence that late winter coveys do not readily exchange members may give hunters cause to resurrect the "shoot



'em up" theory.

However, these new findings do not alter the likelihood that members of these coveys were adequately shuffled earlier in the year. Also, nothing was reported to indicate that the coveys in the studies did not break up when the time came to do so.

Bobwhite populations often fluctuate widely from year to year—but for numerous reasons. Also, within limits, nature does tend to strike a balance between quail lost and quail produced. Where conditions permit, populations which have been knocked back excessively by the gun, weather, or other factors, will respond with added production in an effort to keep up. Indeed, the principle of a maximum sustained yield (the greatest number of quail

which can be consistently bagged from year to year) relies, in part, on a carefully calculated harvest. Still, bobwhite numbers are going to be determined largely by habitat availability and other major influences. It is unlikely that these numbers are going to be substantially exceeded by merely "busting" a covey or dropping a few birds.

Clearly the bobwhite has shown it can deal with considerable adversity, both, natural and man-made. There is no intent here to imply this bird is not capable of withstanding some hunting losses. Even though far less abundant than in the past, where adequate year 'round habitat exists, the bobwhite can still provide some memorable days afield and continue to bounce back.

Far more important than "shoot 'em up" and other such notions concocted to improve quail populations, however, is the effort directed toward conserving suitable living space for this bird. Where this occurs, come spring, whether shot at or not, the bobwhite will do its best to select a mate. Also, be assured, whether it's breeding season consort is from the same covey or a totally new acquaintance, offspring produced will grow up to be sturdy and alert. And if this fall's covey does not behave exactly as you'd like, be grateful for the challenge. Perhaps its members are a little bit wiser than the generation before. □

Irv Kenyon is the Department's area supervisor of the Rapidan-Thompson Wildlife Management Areas.

photo by Rob Simpson

Duck-Proof Rigs

Here's how to set up a decoy rig that will fool the wariest of ducks on your favorite beaver pond or reservoir.

by Steve Ausband



Duck hunters love secrets. Give any waterfowler some sort of specialized information that nobody else has—at least nobody in his hunting party—and he is a happy hunter. Even weird lore is OK, so long as it sounds authoritative. “Actually,” he can say, “I have found that mallards will often circle twice if the hunter can duplicate the sound of the 1934 Packard auto horn on his duck call. A Ford coupe imitation will work too, though most experts agree that it is not as reliable, especially in the late season.” In my youth I knew hunters who could talk like that, and I envied them. There were giants in those days.

In a good duck camp you can still find a choke expert, a call expert, a reloading expert, and a blind-building expert. Once in awhile you can find a

hunter who claims to be expert in all these areas, but he never lasts long. Of all areas of expertise, the most coveted is the lore of the decoy handler. “Handler” may be something of a misnomer, since the true expert does as much advising from the relative comfort of the blind as he does actual arranging of the blocks. “You need to hook those hens back toward the shoreline, Elwood,” he’ll say. “Now, that’s better. Gives ’em a good clear landing area. You might want to watch out for that deep hole, Elwood. Elwood?”

I can’t claim to be an expert in all the esoterica of laying out the blocks, but I have begun to suspect that there’s less to it than I once imagined. I wouldn’t

want to minimize any hunter’s claim to expertise, but I have found that most of the ducks I’ve hunted on inland waters that have done something careless enough to bring them into danger from my shotgun, have fallen for just three basic, very simple decoy patterns. One of these works best on small bodies of water, especially beaver ponds. The second is effective along the shorelines of inland lakes and reservoirs.

Pond rigs are easy for three reasons. They use very few decoys. They are intended to lure only puddle ducks (mallards, blacks, woodies, and the like), so the hunter doesn’t need to make allowances for the radically different flight patterns of divers. And, they often can be arranged with little regard for the wind, unless it is very



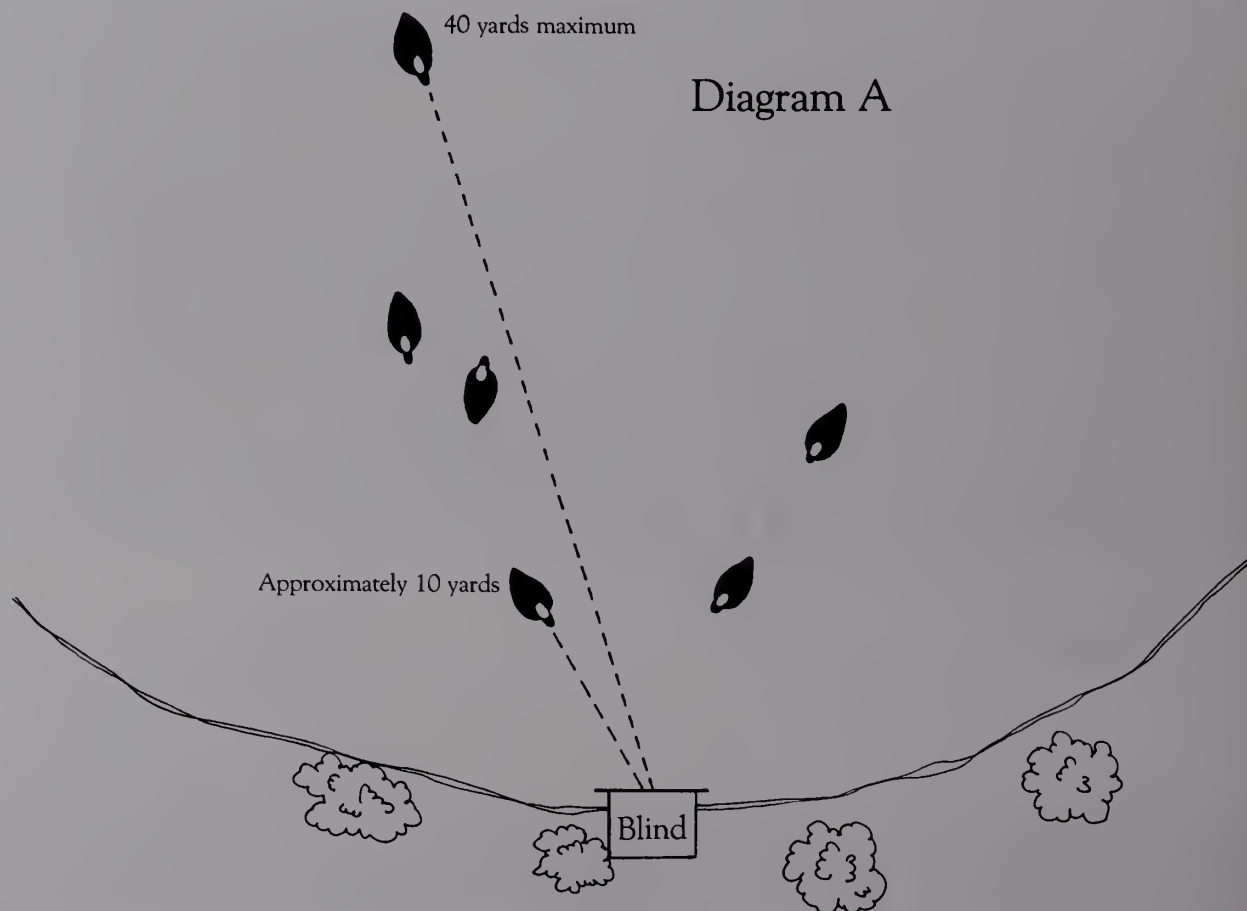
strong, since surrounding trees will largely negate the effect of a breeze. Diagram "A" shows a rig with just six blocks. One hunter with a backpack can carry five or six lightweight decoys into just about any beaver pond he can reach on foot. If two or more hunters are involved, or if the area is reachable by boat, and if the size of the pond allows for it, more decoys can be used. Whether one uses four or a dozen, the arrangement should be roughly in the shape described in the diagram.

The four key elements here are attracting the bird's attention, getting their confidence, providing a clear landing area, and making sure the approach to the landing area does not take the ducks right over the top of any of the decoys.

The one-sided "V" pattern does all

four. The angled pattern assures that birds passing anywhere near the pond will be sure to see at least a few of the decoys. The spread, with a loner (usually a hen, for reasons that have never been entirely clear to me) positioned somewhat away from the rest of the ducks, exactly duplicates the way ducks often sit while resting or feeding. Having the lone hen more-or-less in line with the long arm of the "V" insures that the approaching ducks will not have to fly over her head to land. And the arms of the "V" funnel approaching ducks into an area of open water in front of the blind. (If you use more decoys than are shown in the diagram, beef up the sides of the "V" rather than merely elongating the arms. After all, you want your ducks close to you.)

Birds that circle a decoy spread again and again, trying to get up the courage to land, may be wary veterans that have dodged a lot of shot. Just as often, however, they may be confused by an inexpertly laid spread. Puddle ducks can—and usually do—get straight up off the water when they leave it, in contrast to the long, flapping takeoff of a diver. For this reason, a small flock of mallards will be very hesitant about simply dropping into a hole if their approach takes them over the heads of other birds. Such an approach violates all the ducks' air traffic control rules, and they are loathe to ignore those rules. The elongated "V" allows a safer approach than the birds would have if the decoys were simply clustered in a ragged circle around the landing area.



1988 VIRGINIA HUNTER'S GUIDE



Licenses Required

If you hunt, you must have a valid license. Exceptions to this are (1) Landowners and tenants who live on the land they rent and who have their landlord's *written permission*. (2) Virginia residents 65 years of age or older who hunt on private property in the county of their residence.

What licenses you may need depends upon what, where and even how you hunt. A *basic* resident or non-resident license is required of all hunters and is valid for hunting all upland game. If you want to hunt deer, bear and turkey, an *additional* license is required. A National Forest permit (stamp) is needed to hunt on National Forest land and a similar stamp is required to hunt the Piedmont State Forests. A special archery license is required to hunt during special seasons open for bowhunting only. Some western counties require a game damage stamp to hunt deer or bear within their respective boundaries. These are issued by the clerks of the court in counties where they are required. A federal migratory waterfowl stamp is required for ducks or geese and is available at local post offices. A voluntary state waterfowl stamp is also available for \$5, the proceeds from which will be used for habitat acquisition and restoration, and waterfowl research. A blind license must be displayed on both stationary and floating blinds in, or on the shores, of public waters east of Interstate 95 except in the Eastern Shore counties. Consult the Game Law Summary for particu-

lar information.

A license year is from July 1-June 30. Licenses may be obtained from the clerks of most courts and from authorized Department agents conveniently located throughout the state. Requirement clarification may be obtained from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104. Phone (804) 367-1000.

Fees

Lifetime resident license hunt and fish (does not include big game license or any other supplemental licenses.) ... \$300.00

County or city resident to hunt in county or city of residence only

..... 5.00

State resident license to hunt statewide

..... 12.00

State resident junior license to hunt statewide (15 yrs & under) ... 7.50

Nonresident license to hunt statewide

..... 60.00

State resident deer, bear, and turkey license to hunt statewide required in addition to county or state hunting

license 12.00

State resident junior big game license to hunt deer, bear and turkey statewide (15 years and under) 7.50

State resident archery license to hunt statewide 12.00

Nonresident deer, bear, and turkey license to hunt statewide, required in addition to hunting license

..... 60.00

Nonresident archery license to hunt statewide 25.00

Special stamp to hunt deer and bear in Alleghany, Bland, Botetourt, Craig, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Highland, Patrick, Rockbridge, Russell, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe counties, in addition to other licenses, and sold only by the clerks of court of those counties (holders of senior citizen license exempted.) 1.00

Virginia nonresident special stamp in Giles and Russell counties

..... 1.00

Virginia nonresident special stamp in Alleghany, Bland, Botetourt, Craig, Floyd, Grayson, Highland, Patrick, Rockbridge, Smyth, Washington and Wythe counties 5.00

Senior citizen license to hunt

..... 1.00

Senior citizen license to trap

..... 1.00

County or city resident to trap in county or city of residence only

..... 10.00

State resident to trap statewide

..... 35.00

National forest permit (stamp) to hunt, fish or trap on national forests, required in addition to hunting licenses (holders of senior citizen license ex-

empted)	3.00
Permit to hunt or trap on Appomattox, Buckingham, Cumberland, Prince Edward-Gallion and Pocahontas State Forest (sold by the Division of Forestry) may be obtained from Forest Headquarters or clerk of court in local counties	5.00
Federal migratory bird hunting stamp to take migratory waterfowl, required of persons 16 years of age and over in addition to hunting licenses and sold at U.S. Post Offices	10.00
Virginia migratory waterfowl stamp (voluntary)	5.00
Virginia nonresident to hunt on shooting preserves only obtainable in counties in which preserves are located	12.00

Hunting Laws

Hunter Education

All first-time hunters and anyone from the ages of 12 to 15 years old will have to demonstrate that they have successfully completed an approved hunter education course before they can buy a hunting license. Persons 16 years old or over will be exempted if they have held a hunting license in prior years. Virginia recognizes all other states and countries hunter education programs. For convenience, current licensed hunters should save their old licenses until they buy their new ones. For information on hunter safety courses in your area, phone (804) 367-1000 or write to: Hunter Safety Courses, Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104.

Hunter Education Training Sergeant Phone Numbers

District 1

Rex Hill, Chesterfield Office,
(804) 674-2699

District 2

Mike Ashworth, Vinton Office
(703) 938-7704

District 3

Harry Street, III, Marion Office
(703) 783-4860

District 4

Jess Sager, Staunton Office
(703) 332-9210

District 5

Randy Grauer, Fredericksburg Office
(703) 334-4062

District 6

Diane Thompson, Deep Creek Office,
(804) 683-2868

Blaze Orange Required

Every hunter or person accompanying a hunter during a firearms deer season shall wear a blaze orange hat or blaze orange upper body clothing that is visible from 360 degrees or display at least 100 square inches of solid blaze orange material at shoulder level within body reach and visible from 360 degrees. Blaze orange is not required during the special muzzle loading season or during spring gobbler season. Fall turkey hunters will be required to wear blaze orange during that part of the fall turkey season that falls within the firearms deer season. Those not required to wear blaze orange are: waterfowl hunters, who hunt from stationary or floating blinds, over decoys, in marshes and swamps, or from a boat or other floating conveyance; individuals participating in hunting dog field trials and fox hunters on horseback without firearms.

Steel Shot Zones

Effective with the 1987-88 waterfowl hunting season, steel shot is now required in Charles City, Gloucester, James City, New Kent and York counties, and in the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Suffolk and Virginia Beach. For the upcoming 1988-89 season, Accomack County and the cities of Poquoson, Portsmouth and Williamsburg are now included in the list of counties requiring steel shot. Additional counties will be phased into the steel shot only zones next year and each year thereafter through 1990. Effective with the 1991-92 waterfowl hunting season, steel shot will be required statewide for waterfowl hunting.

Hunting Seasons

Hunting seasons and bag limits are

set by the Game Department on a two-year basis as changes in game habitat conditions, game populations, hunting pressure, and other factors dictate. In some cases, counties have adopted local ordinances relating to the use of rifles and shotgun slugs, firearms safety zones, and hunting in public places (such as along roads). It is crucial to refer to the hunting regulations for these county differences.

The hunting regulations are brought up-to-date and published each year around the first of July. They are distributed through license agents and sporting goods outlets throughout the state.

Where to Hunt

Finding good places to hunt in Virginia requires planning. Simply traveling the highways and byways until you see unposted land is not the right way to hunt at all!

No privately owned land, posted or not, is open to hunting without first obtaining permission. Written permission is required on posted land and verbal permission in all other cases. Posted land, in addition to signs, may be recognized by silver or aluminum painted stripes on trees. Public hunting lands (state and federal) are also available, as well as lands managed by private timber. Below is a description of the public hunting lands available in Virginia.

National Forests

The George Washington and Jefferson National Forests provide the largest amount of land open to the general public for hunting in Virginia. Most of the 1.5 million acres of the National Forests is open to public hunting and camping unless specifically designated closed. A annual \$3 stamp is required to hunt or fish on the National Forests. The stamp can be purchased at most outlets that sell hunting licenses. Hunting regulations, seasons and bag limits conform with state and county regulations. Individual Ranger District maps may be obtained at any Forest Service Office for \$1 each. Information can be obtained from:

George Washington National Forest Headquarters, Harrison Plaza, Harrisonburg, VA 22801, phone (703) 433-2491; Ranger District Offices in Bridgewater, Buena Vista, Covington, Edinburg, Hot Springs and Staunton.

Jefferson National Forest Headquarters, Federal Building, 210 Franklin Road, SW, Roanoke, VA 24001, phone (703) 982-6270; Ranger District Offices in Blacksburg, Wise, Natural Bridge Station, Marion, New Castle and Wytheville.

Game Department Public Hunting Lands

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries owns approximately 176,000 acres of land in Virginia purchased with hunter license dollars and open to public hunting with a minimum of restrictions. With the exception of the daily blind permits on waterfowl areas

West of the Blue Ridge: 1st Saturday in October-January 31 and 1st Saturday in April to 2nd Saturday in May. *East of the Blue Ridge:* 1st Saturday in October-February 28 and 1st Saturday in April to 2nd Saturday in May.

Foot travel is invited on roads closed to motor vehicles.

Primitive camping (no developed facilities) is permitted, except as otherwise posted, on Department lands not to exceed a maximum of 7 days and in groups not to exceed 3 camping units. Camping is prohibited on or within 100 yards of any Department owned or controlled boat ramp or fishing lake.

Amelia Wildlife Management Area—2,217 acres in Amelia County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, quail, dove, and waterfowl. David N. Ellinghausen, WMA Supervisor, Route 4, Box 129F, Amelia, VA 23002.



at Back Bay and Hog Island, there is no charge for hunting on these areas.

Hunting seasons and bag limits on Department areas usually conform to those for the surrounding county. Most are open for the early archery seasons. Dove hunting is permitted during the regular open season on Wednesdays and Saturdays only. Hunter access roads on Department lands normally open to motor vehicles will be open as indicated (weather permitting).

Back Bay Hunting Areas—Pocahontas, 796 acres; Trojan, 351 acres. Fee hunting areas with blinds allocated by drawing. Information on blinds, fees, and drawings available from the Game Department after Labor Day. Otto Halstead, Area Manager, Box 7100, Virginia Beach, VA 23457.

Briery Creek Wildlife Management Area—2,775 acres in Prince Edward County. Deer, turkey, quail, dove and waterfowl. Waterfowl hunting permitted during regular open season on

Wednesdays and Saturdays and season opening date only. George N. Goin, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 247, Cumberland, VA 23040.

C.F. Phelps Wildlife Management Area—4,540 acres in Fauquier County. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, grouse, quail, and waterfowl. Good access to Rappahannock River. Robert D. Hanson, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 105, Remington, VA 22734.

Chickahominy Wildlife Management Area—5,155 acres in Charles City County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbit, quail, dove and waterfowl. Floating waterfowl blinds or hunting from shore with a distance of 500 yards between hunters. Primitive camping available with a maximum stay of 7 days. David Brime, WMA Supervisor, Route 1, Box 115, Charles City, VA 23030.

Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area—25,477 acres in Smyth, Russell, Tazewell and Washington counties. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, grouse and waterfowl. Area Supervisor, unappointed, Route 2, Box 218, Saltville, VA 24370.

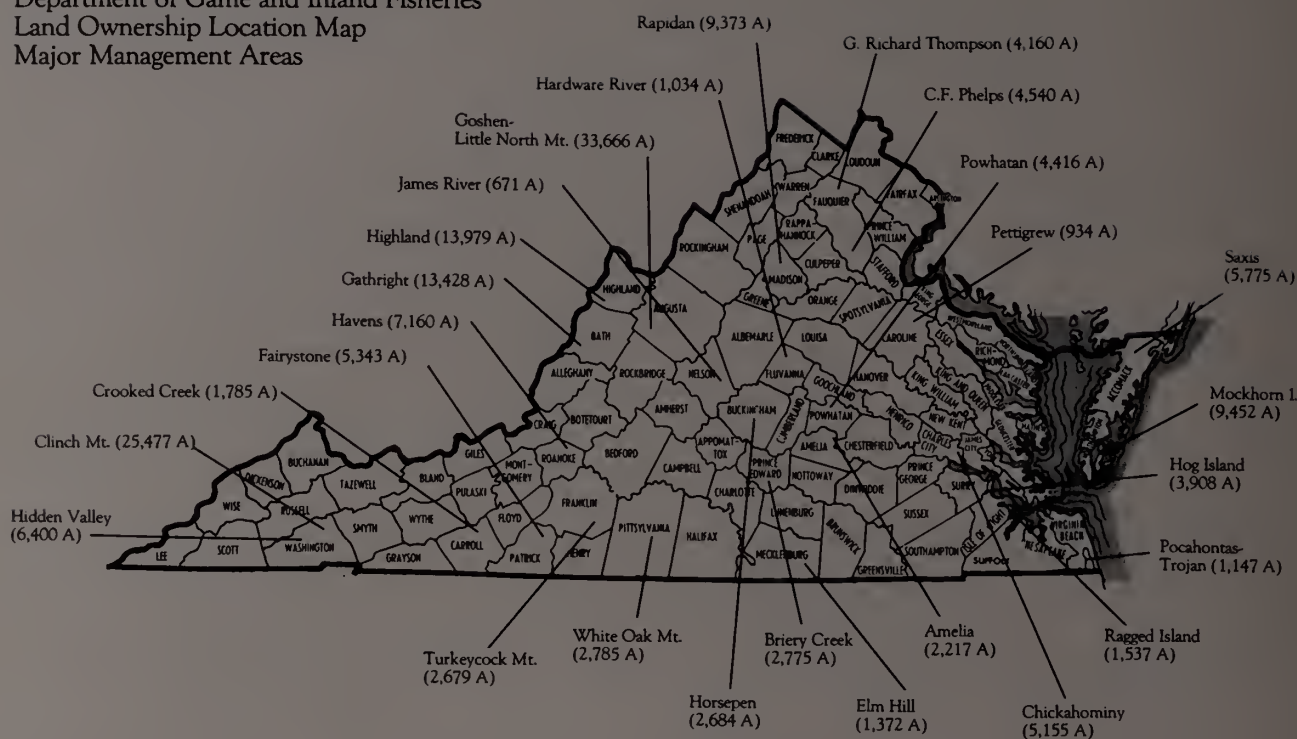
Crooked Creek Wildlife Management Area—1,750 acres in Carroll County. Deer, turkey, rabbits and squirrel. D.H. Martin, WMA Supervisor, Rt. 2, Box 171, Woodlawn, VA 24381. **Elm Hill Wildlife Management Area**—1,372 acres in Mecklenburg County. Upland game and doves. Danny W. Johnson, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 109-A, Clarksville, VA 23927.

Fairystone Farms Wildlife Management Area—5,343 acres in Patrick and Henry Counties. Camping nearby at Fairystone State Park and Philpott Reservoir. Deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit and grouse. Mark Frank, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 185, Bassett, VA 24055.

G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area—4,160 acres in Fauquier County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbit and grouse. Irvin L. Kenyon, Jr., WMA Supervisor, Route 1, Sperryville, VA 22740.

Gathright Wildlife Management Area—13,428 acres in Bath and Alleghany Counties. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel,

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
Land Ownership Location Map
Major Management Areas



raccoon, rabbit, grouse and waterfowl. Kenneth R. Sexton, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 648, Hot Springs, VA 24445.

Goshen Wildlife Management Area—16,128 acres in Rockbridge County. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon and grouse. H. Eugene Sours, WMA Supervisor, Box 32, Swoope, VA 24479.

Hardware River Wildlife Management Area—1,034 acres in Fluvanna County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, quail, and dove. Last three days of deer season may be antlerless. Stanley H. Patterson, WMA Supervisor, 4712 Old Buckingham Road, Powhatan, VA 23139.

Havens Wildlife Management Area—7,160 acres in Roanoke County. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon and grouse. Foot access only. Dan Lovelace, WMA Supervisor, Route 1, Box 58, Buchanan, VA 24066.

Hidden Valley Wildlife Management Area—6,400 acres in Washington

County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit and grouse. Area supervisor, unappointed, Route 2, Box 218, Saltville, VA 24370.

Highland Wildlife Management Area—13,979 acres in Highland County. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon and grouse. Rodger L. Propst, WMA Supervisor, Route E, Box 70, Monterey, VA 24465.

Hog Island Waterfowl Management Area—3,908 acres in Surry County. Bowhunting for deer during special archery early season. Managed waterfowl hunting. Fee hunting area. Advance fee reservation required. Information on fees and drawings available from the Game Department after Labor Day. Clyde Abernathy, Area Manager, RFD, Surry, VA 23883.

Horsepen Lake Wildlife Management Area—2,684 acres (18 acre lake) in Buckingham County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbit and quail. Raymond S. Franklin, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 626, Appomattox, VA 24522.

James River Wildlife Management Area—671 acres in Nelson County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, quail, dove and waterfowl. Raymond S. Franklin, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 626, Appomattox, VA 24522.

Little North Mountain Wildlife Management Area—17,538 acres in Augusta and Rockbridge Counties. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon and grouse. H. Eugene Sours, WMA Supervisor, Box 32, Swoope, VA 24479.

Mockhorn Island Wildlife Management Area—9,452 acres in Northampton County. Rail and limited waterfowl. Accessible by boat only. Granville Ross, WMA Supervisor, P.O. Box 212, Hallwood, VA 23359.

Pettigrew Wildlife Management Area—934 acres in Caroline County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbit and quail. Milton Gallahan, WMA Supervisor, Route 3, Box 1186, King George, VA 22485.



Powhatan Wildlife Management Area—4,416 acres in Powhatan County.

Deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, quail and dove. Stanley H. Patterson, WMA Supervisor, 4712 Old Buckingham Road, Powhatan, VA 23139.

Ragged Island Wildlife Management Area—1,537 acres in Isle of Wight County. Waterfowl and deer by shotgun and bow and arrow only. Clyde Abernathy, WMA Supervisor, RFD, Surry, VA 23883.

Rapidan Wildlife Management Area—9,373 acres in Madison and Green Counties. Bear, deer, turkey, squirrel, grouse and woodcock. Irvin L. Kenyon, Jr., WMA Supervisor, Route 1, Sperryville, VA 22740.

Saxis Wildlife Management Area—5,775 acres in Accomack County. Deer, rail and waterfowl. Granville

Ross, WMA Supervisor, P.O. Box 212 Hallwood, VA 23359.

Turkeycock Mountain Wildlife Management Area—2,679 acres in Franklin County. Deer, turkey, squirrel and grouse. Mark Frank, WMA Supervisor, Route 2, Box 185, Bassett, VA 24055.

White Oak Mountain Wildlife Management Area—2,785 acres in Pittsylvania County. Deer, turkey, squirrel, raccoon, rabbit, quail and dove. Jessie B. Robertson, Jr., WMA Supervisor, Route 1, Box 76-G, Chatham, VA 24531.

Waterfowl Blind Drawing On Management Areas

A public drawing for waterfowl blinds is held annually to hunt at

Island Wildlife Management Areas. Applications are available from the Game Department's Richmond office after Labor Day.

General Rules and Procedures for Pocahontas, Barbours Hill & Hog Island Areas

Before any persons may hunt on these areas, they must first apply for shooting dates and be awarded same by an authorized representative of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. All hunters must check in and out of the respective area headquarters. Only properly completed applications, including a current year Virginia hunting license number (exactly as printed), received in the Richmond office prior to 5 p.m. on October 11, 1988 will be entered in the public drawing. Only one (1) application per person will be accepted for each area. If duplicate license numbers are submitted for an area, both applications will be voided. Checks and money orders must be made payable to the Treasurer of Virginia in the correct amount for each area. A separate check must accompany each application. No cash. After the public drawing, reservations must be obtained in person or by mail only from the appropriate Area Manager.

Pocahontas Area & Barbours Hill Area—\$15 fee. Otto Halstead, Area Manager, Box 7100, Virginia Beach, Va 23457

Hog Island Area—\$15 fee. Clyde Abernathy, Area Manager, RFD, Surry, VA 23883.

General Rules and Procedures For Trojan Area (Not in Drawing)

There is no public drawing for permits on this area. Permits are issued daily on a first come-first served basis. Priority for Trojan blinds will be given to persons holding Pocahontas permits in the event of unsafe boating conditions on Back Bay. Rental fee is \$5 per day for use of a Department-owned blind. Dogs are permitted. The area will be closed to hunting at 2 p.m. daily. Trojan Headquarters is located at the end of Back Bay Landing Rd. off Rt. 615 in Virginia Beach. Area Manager: Otto Halstead, Box 7100, Virginia Beach, VA 23457.

Cooperative Public Hunting Areas

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is responsible for wildlife management on some 250,000 acres of land it does not own in return for hunting privileges and benefits to sportsmen.

Piedmont State Forests

These are owned by the Virginia Department of Forestry. Cumberland State Forest, 16,779 acres in western Cumberland County north of U.S. 60. Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest, 19,706 acres south of Route 24 in Appomattox and Buckingham counties. Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest, 6,964 acres in eastern Prince Edward County north of Route 360. Pocahontas State Forest, 5,648 acres south of Richmond in Chesterfield County. A portion of this area which adjoins the state park is closed to hunting.

All of the above are open to holders of a \$5.00 state forest stamp available from agents located near the properties. A state or county hunting license is required. To purchase a stamp by mail, the individual's name, state hunting license number, and a self-addressed stamped envelope is required. Maps are available from each of the State Forest offices.

The season for some animals may be different on the State Forest than in the county in which they are located. These are specified in the Game Law Summary produced by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. In addition, there are safety zones established on each forest around the offices and houses where no hunting is allowed.

For information, contact: James E. Bowen, Superintendent of State Forests. Phone (804) 492-4121. For maps and forest stamp information, write to: Cumberland State Forest, Route 1, Box 250, Cumberland, VA 23040.

Military Areas

Marine Corps Base, MCCDC Quantico. 50,000 acres in Fauquier, Prince William and Stafford counties. A minimum of 15% of the available hunting spaces each day are reserved

for off-post civilian hunters. All must purchase the annual base hunting permit after attending a mandatory hunting orientation/safety lecture which is given at the base game checking station. Lectures are given from October 1-January 31 and during spring gobbler season. For information concerning cost of permits and times of lectures, call (703) 640-5311. Daily hunting quotas vary depending upon military commitments. Shotgun slugs are required for deer hunting. Deer may not be hunted with dogs or by driving. Certain areas allow muzzle loaders.

Fort A.P. Hill Military Reservation. 76,000 acres in Caroline County. Fee permits issued on a first-come-first-served basis from hunting section office. Shotgun and bow and arrow are only weapons permitted. Dogs may not be used to hunt deer. Dove hunting on Wednesdays and Saturdays only during the regular dove season. Maps available. Write to: Directorate of Engineering & Housing, Attn: Hunt Check Station, Fort A.P. Hill, Bowling Green, Virginia 22427-5000. Phone (804) 633-8300 or 633-8477. A state license is required and a \$20.00 permit.

Radford Army Ammunition Plant. 2,800 acres in Pulaski County. Deer is the only legal game that can be hunted. Hunters are selected from Game Department applications received before September of each year. Applications are available beginning July 1st of each year. A total of 250 hunters are selected for 5 archery hunts and 120 selected for 4 shotgun hunts. All hunting is restricted to Saturdays and holidays (Thanksgiving). All hunting is restricted to the available stands. Applicants selected to hunt are not eligible to apply to hunt the following year. Application fee is \$2.50 and the hunt permit is \$7.50. All other appropriate licenses are required (big game, archery, state license). For further information, contact: Commander RAAP, Attn: Deer Hunt Coordinator, Radford, VA 24141. Other contacts: Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Rt. 1,

Box 107, Marion, VA 24354. Phone: (703) 783-4860 or the Richmond office at 4010 W. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230-1104. Phone: (804) 367-1000.

Fort Pickett Military Reservation. 45,198 acres in Brunswick, Dinwiddie and Nottoway counties. Hunting normally permitted Monday through Saturday except Christmas and New Year's Day. Daily hunting quotas are based on troop training activities. Geographical areas on Fort Pickett may be closed at any time due to military training missions on the installation. Only shotguns (no slugs) and bow and arrow are allowed for hunting. Dogs may be used to hunt both big and small game. Dove hunting is permitted on Wednesdays and Saturdays (afternoon only). Hunters must wear blaze orange (minimum of 500 square inches above the waist) during the general hunting season. In addition to a state hunting license, a Fort Pickett permit is required. The permit fee is \$12.00 and \$7.50 for junior hunters. Hunting information and map may be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: HQ, U.S. Army Garrison, Attn: Game Check Station, Fort Pickett, Blackstone, VA 23824. For additional information/inquiries, phone (804) 292-2618.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- 4,750 acres in Franklin, Henry, and Patrick counties surrounding Philpott Lake. No permit required. Map available from Resource Manager, Route 6, Box 140, Bassett, VA 24055.
- 38,000 acres in Charlotte, Halifax and Mecklenburg counties surrounding John H. Kerr Reservoir. No special permit required. Nineteen developed wildlife management areas. Map and management area guide available from Reservoir Manager, Route 1, Box 76, Boydton, VA 23917.
- 6,419 acres in Dickenson County surrounding John W. Flannagan Dam and Reservoir. No permit required. For additional information, contact Resource Manager, Route 1, Box 268, Haysi, VA 24256-9736; phone (703) 835-9544.

- 88 acres in Wise County surrounding North Fork of Pound River Lake. No permit required. For additional information, contact: Project Supervisor, Route 1, Box 369, Pound, VA 25279-9769; phone (703) 796-5775.

State Parks

When traveling through State Park areas not designated for hunting, guns must be unloaded and cased.

Fairystone State Park—Route 2, Box 134, Stuart, VA 24171. 2,400 acres in Patrick and Henry counties only. No permit required. Remainder of park closed except for camping and other park activities. No maps.

Sailor's Creek Battlefield State Park—240 acres in Amelia and Prince Edward counties. Special designated areas for hunting are marked. For information, contact Twin Lakes State

While not designated for hunting, there are also six State Parks offering primitive camping to hunters of adjacent areas. For information, phone (804) 786-1712.

Industrial Land

Appalachian Power Cooperative Management Areas—6,000 acres surrounding Smith Mountain Lake in Bedford and Pittsylvania counties. No permit required. No maps available. For information, contact Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Route 1, Box 76-G, Chatham, VA 24531.

Union Camp Corporation Cooperative Management Areas—Union Camp Corp., Woodlands Division, P.O. Box 178, Franklin, VA 23851. 16,000 acres in Brunswick County near Lawrenceville south of Route 58, in several tracts. No permit required. Map available.



Park, Route 2, Box 70, Greenbay, VA 23942. No permit required. No maps.

Grayson-Highland State Park—Route 2, Box 141, Mouth of Wilson, VA 24363. 1,200 acres in Grayson County. No permit required. Maps available, phone (804) 786-1712.

False Cape State Park—4,321 acres in Virginia Beach. Limited waterfowl hunting by permit. Limited deer and feral hog hunting confined to a two-week period beginning the last Monday in October through the second Saturday in November. Contact Area Manager, Otto Halstead, Box 7100, Virginia Beach, VA 23457.

Oconeechee State Park—Box 818, Clarksville, VA 23927. 2,100 acres in Mecklenburg County on Buggs Island Lake. No permit required. Maps available, phone (804) 786-1712.

Westvaco Cooperative Management Area—Westvaco, Timberlands Division, P.O. Box 557, Rupert, West Virginia 25984. 900 acres in Amherst County. No permit required. Maps are not available.

Forest Industry Lands

An annual permit is required by each of these companies. Fees vary. A state license is required in addition to timber permit.

Bear Island Timberlands Company, Bear Island Hunting Permit, P.O. Box 2119, Ashland, VA 23005. Approximately 150,000 acres are available for permit hunting in the counties of Albemarle, Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Caroline, Charles City, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Essex,

Fluvanna, Goochland, Greensville, Halifax, Hanover, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, Louisa, Lunenburg, Middlesex, Nelson, New Kent, Nottoway, Orange, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Surry, and Sussex. Permits are valid on any company properties owned by Bear Island and Continental Forest Investments which are not red posted or leased to private hunt clubs. Bear Island's permits may be obtained in person at Bear Island's Mill Site in Hanover County on Route 738 approximately two miles east of Route 1 and six miles north of Ashland, or by mailing a request with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Permits are \$10 each; \$5 disabled and senior citizens with proof of age or disability required. Individual county maps showing property locations are available for \$1 per map. Mail requests for maps must be accompanied by a 10" x 13" self-addressed envelope with 45¢ postage. Permits are valid from September 1988 through May 13, 1989. Permits go on sale August 15. For more information, phone (804) 227-3394.

Continental Forest Investments, Inc. c/o Bear Island Hunting Permit, P.O. Box 2119, Ashland, VA 23005. Approximately 50,000 acres available for permit hunting in the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Greensville, Halifax, Mecklenburg, Nelson, Prince Edward, Surry, and Sussex. Permits are valid on any company properties which are not red posted or leased to private hunt clubs. Continental's permits will be sold by Bear Island Timberlands Company and will cover both companies' properties. Permits may be obtained in person at Bear Island's Mill Site in Hanover County or by mailing a request with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Permits are \$10 each; \$5 disabled and senior citizens with proof of age or disability required. Permits are valid from September 1988 through May 13, 1989. Permits go on sale August 15. For more information, phone (804) 227-3394.



Champion International Corporation, Forest Lands Manager, P.O. Box 309, Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870. Some acreage is leased for exclusive use and is so posted. About 34,000 acres in southside counties, including Brunswick, Halifax, and Lunenburg, is open for permit hunting. Individual county permits are \$3 and statewide permits are \$7. County maps showing permit hunting lands are available for \$1 each if the request is accompanied by a 10" x 13" or larger self-addressed envelope with postage for three ounces.

Chesapeake Corporation—Public hunting permits are sold at the four Woodland Regional Offices during normal business hours or by mail. All mail requests must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Blanket requests for maps will not be honored. Permits will not be issued to persons under the age of seven. Per-

mits are valid for hunting only. Permits are \$8. The Woodland Area offices are:

West Point Region—approximately 50,000 acres located in Charles City, Gloucester, James City, King and Queen, King William, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent and Prince George counties (VA). Chesapeake Corp., Hunting Permits, Box 311, West Point, VA 23181.

Pocomokee Region—approximately 10,000 acres located in Accomack, Northampton (VA), Dorchester, Caroline, Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset (MD), and Sussex (DE). Chesapeake Corp., Hunting Permits, Box 300, Pocomoke City, MD 21851.

Keysville Region—approximately 45,000 acres located in Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Flu-

vanna, Goochland, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Powhatan and Prince Edward counties (VA). Chesapeake Corp., Hunting Permits, Box 450, Keysville, VA 23947.

Warsaw Region—approximately 25,000 acres in Caroline, Essex, Hanover, King George, Lancaster, Louisa, Northumberland, Orange, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Westmoreland counties (VA). Chesapeake Corp., Hunting Permits, Box 942, Warsaw, VA 22572.

Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company, Thomas N. Reeder Jr., District Manager, Box 868, Fredericksburg, VA 22404. Phone (703) 373-9431. Counties with one or more tracts open for hunting include Appomattox, Buckingham, Caroline, Culpeper, Cumberland, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Halifax, Hanover, King George, Louisa, Lunenburg, Nottoway, Orange and Spotsylvania counties. Total is about 25,000 acres. Some acreage is leased for exclusive use and so posted; all other unposted properties open to permit holders. Permits cost \$10 and require state license information. Special regulations are printed on back of permit. Maps are available upon request. All requests must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Lester Properties, Kenneth O. Scruggs, Forestlands Department Manager, Post Office Drawer 4991, Martinsville, VA 24115. Phone (703) 632-2195 ext. 250. Tracts are available for lease at negotiable prices, but choice areas are going quick. No public hunting is available. There are 20,000 acres in the counties of Franklin, Halifax, Henry and Pittsylvania. Maps are available upon request.

Westvaco, Timberlands Division, P.O. Box 557, Rupert, WV 25984. More than 160,000 acres open in 20 counties, including Appomattox, Botetourt, Buckingham, Campbell, Halifax and Pittsylvania. Some tracts leased exclusively to hunt clubs. Combination hunting and fishing permits for \$10, upon request and accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope plus current hunting and fishing license number. Maps are not available.

P.H.O.N.E. (Poachers Hurt Our Natural Environment) Program

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries established a violation reporting program on October 1, 1986.

A toll-free number (1-800-237-5712) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week including holidays, to report game, fish or boating violations. The P.H.O.N.E. Line is staffed 8 a.m. -5 p.m. daily. An answering system will record call-back requests after hours.

A reward fund has been established by The Virginia Sportsmen Reward Fund, Inc. and is offered for information leading to an arrest. Callers may remain anonymous and are not required to testify in court.

Maps

A good map is essential for a successful hunting experience. Topographic maps are available from the following sources:

Virginia Reproduction & Supply Company, 9 W. Cary St., Richmond, VA 23220, (804) 643-9116.

Virginia Division of Mineral Resources, Box 3667, Charlottesville, VA 22903, (804) 293-5121.

U.S. Geological Survey, Branch of Distribution, Box 25286, DFC, Denver, CO 80255. (Use this address is you know the particular map you want.)

U.S. Geological Survey, National Cartographic Information Center (NCIC), 507 National Center, Reston, VA 22902, (703) 860-6045. (Use this address to request a index of the state maps available to find the particular map you are looking for.)

Contact each firm individually for procedures and fee information.

Statewide Deer, Bear, and Fall Turkey Harvest

County	1985 — 1986			1986 — 1987			1987 — 1988		
	Deer	Bear	Turkey	Deer	Bear	Turkey	Deer	Bear	Turkey
Accomack	525	0	0	776	0	0	661	0	7
Albemarle	1,703	15	214	1,808	61	261	2,059	39	359
Alleghany	1,856	15	265	2,210	9	514	1,697	24	318
Amelia	1,729	0	164	1,389	0	201	1,858	0	302
Amherst	996	13	213	1,390	15	274	1,599	9	388
Appomattox	558	0	183	697	0	187	864	0	318
Augusta	2,852	47	201	4,140	25	324	2,658	48	218
Bath	3,725	16	400	4,286	8	506	3,219	25	339
Bedford	2,197	21	309	2,913	22	359	3,650	10	566
Bland	1,279	9	190	1,826	3	290	1,541	19	260
Botetourt	1,638	31	233	2,698	32	405	2,474	19	478
Brunswick	1,649	0	195	1,505	0	190	1,704	0	263
Buchanan	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	1	3
Buckingham	1,640	0	257	1,773	0	331	2,060	0	471
Campbell	335	0	134	497	0	153	568	0	266
Caroline	1,745	0	291	1,751	0	332	1,670	0	396
Carroll	524	0	183	777	0	290	763	0	295
Charles City	1,572	0	14	1,342	0	31	924	0	41
Charlotte	967	0	125	892	0	164	1,088	0	260
Chesapeake	258	5	0	356	8	0	394	5	0
Chesterfield	945	0	50	833	0	45	665	0	83
Clarke	456	0	36	744	0	36	662	0	52
Craig	1,739	13	183	2,911	16	324	2,180	14	196
Culpeper	779	0	105	886	0	129	930	0	160
Cumberland	1,348	0	153	1,447	0	208	1,887	0	345
Dickenson	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	0	3
Dinwiddie	1,340	0	163	1,129	0	164	1,190	0	248
Essex	213	0	45	300	0	50	389	0	96
Fairfax	148	0	2	150	0	1	218	0	4
Fauquier	1,801	0	68	1,962	0	115	1,973	0	157
Floyd	545	0	83	745	0	179	785	0	180
Fluvanna	807	0	162	957	0	185	1,339	0	303
Franklin	1,025	0	145	1,251	0	252	1,375	0	428
Frederick	1,450	0	147	2,371	0	327	1,800	0	367
Giles	1,784	12	198	2,220	19	309	2,026	25	388
Gloucester	281	0	0	310	0	0	370	0	11
Goochland	803	0	121	880	0	158	1,049	0	218
Grayson	2,884	1	184	3,379	0	227	2,769	0	199
Greene	195	11	24	168	23	30	199	17	45
Greensville	1,245	0	7	1,249	0	9	1,202	0	24
Halifax	1,198	0	245	1,142	0	213	1,511	0	441
Hampton-Newport News (city)	126	0	0	266	0	0	252	0	3
Hanover	454	0	79	432	0	154	507	0	162
Henrico	499	0	9	471	0	19	592	0	24
Henry	397	0	37	601	0	52	684	0	56
Highland	2,617	11	195	3,389	12	230	2,492	14	211
Isle of Wight	1,383	1	0	1,545	0	0	1,520	1	7
James City	431	0	0	520	0	0	648	0	4
King & Queen	855	0	108	831	0	115	902	0	209
King George	664	0	0	711	0	0	1,016	0	47
King William	650	0	117	810	0	161	827	0	149
Lancaster	428	0	0	463	0	0	557	0	3
Lee	217	0	28	224	0	33	308	0	132
Loudoun	2,137	0	43	2,607	0	68	2,378	0	92
Louisa	933	0	159	965	0	188	1,048	0	299
Lunenburg	856	0	86	777	0	88	1,015	0	150
Madison	287	25	28	396	53	53	433	34	92
Mathews	96	0	0	119	0	0	130	0	6
Mecklenburg	636	0	17	625	0	6	912	0	32
Middlesex	91	0	6	124	0	8	114	0	13
Montgomery	816	10	91	1,085	16	159	1,091	9	202
Nelson	670	30	115	880	44	188	1,087	10	281
New Kent	1,490	0	36	1,411	0	30	1,025	0	84
Northampton	321	0	0	423	0	0	323	0	1
Northumberland	384	0	0	450	0	0	551	0	10
Nottoway	1,199	0	96	1,071	0	79	1,126	0	153
Orange	536	0	53	577	0	71	748	0	137
Page	616	29	57	1,086	25	86	980	34	104
Patrick	573	0	37	716	0	95	920	0	143
Pittsylvania	1,838	0	189	2,259	0	230	2,921	0	468
Powhatan	1,387	0	97	1,463	0	140	1,927	0	222
Prince Edward	1,296	0	145	1,357	0	233	1,779	0	331
Prince George	1,017	0	52	1,261	0	57	1,442	0	119
Prince William	474	0	23	791	0	44	936	0	111
Pulaski	715	1	90	1,039	0	204	1,031	2	159
Rappahannock	1,050	13	42	1,347	18	70	1,661	28	98
Richmond	459	0	0	548	0	0	735	0	39
Roanoke	218	0	17	338	0	47	406	6	80
Rockbridge	1,735	46	244	2,652	35	324	2,200	16	311
Rockingham	3,287	58	138	5,251	48	253	2,959	73	166
Russell	99	2	25	125	4	6	154	2	48
Scott	286	0	56	364	0	46	429	0	182
Shenandoah	2,556	11	151	3,729	16	317	2,624	24	293
Smyth	1,081	2	122	1,144	1	162	1,137	0	136
Southampton	3,932	0	0	4,185	0	0	4,627	0	3
Spotsylvania	647	0	88	510	0	74	622	0	136
Stafford	537	0	36	627	0	64	784	0	142
Suffolk	1,237	13	0	1,429	2	0	1,293	7	4
Surry	1,947	0	0	1,897	0	0	1,643	0	50
Sussex	2,291	0	41	2,376	0	44	2,109	0	93
Tazewell	242	5	50	325	6	78	383	16	111
Virginia Beach	205	0	0	400	0	0	293	0	0
Warren	926	5	38	1,194	13	111	1,280	24	102
Washington	339	0	44	440	3	42	397	0	78
Westmoreland	442	0	0	465	0	0	622	0	62
Wise	149	0	46	168	0	35	273	0	135
Wythe	1,283	3	199	1,780	2	183	1,604	2	166
York	641	0	3	661	0	6	838	0	10
Totals	101,412	474	9,025	121,760	539	12,426	119,309	557	16,157

Hunting Season Outlook 1988-89

by Bob Duncan, Assistant Chief Game Division

1987-88 Deer Season Summary

The 1987-88 statewide total of 119,309 deer represented the second best season ever for Old Dominion hunters and was only off the record mark set in 1986 by 2,500 deer. Though the deer kill west of the Blue Ridge was down by 20 percent from last year's total with only 42,366 deer taken, the eastern deer harvest reached a new high of 76,943 animals. The top ten deer kill counties included Southampton (4,627), Bedford (3,650), Bath (3,219), Rockingham (2,959), Pittsylvania (2,921), Grayson (2,769), Augusta (2,658), Shenandoah (2,624), Highland (2,492) and Botetourt (2,474).

Counties throughout the Piedmont experienced improved deer hunting in 1987 over previous seasons and the western counties in that area posted increases in harvest ranging from 22 to 23 percent. Eastern Piedmont counties, in comparison, reported increases of 15 to 19 percent. Generally, the Tidewater deer harvest remained unchanged, with district increases of two (south of the James River) and three percent (north of the James River). However, the Northern Neck counties proved an exception to the trend with increases averaging about 30 percent, as a result of bag limit changes in the area.

Poor weather affected hunter success west of the Blue Ridge and in the central mountains, areas which normally produce some of the highest deer kills per county. These areas experienced a drop of approximately 27 percent. Northern Virginia experienced a reduction in the deer kill of 7 percent and southwest Virginia was also down, with two districts reporting declines of 8 and 9 percent. The "bucks only" counties of southwest Virginia produced a harvest increase of 18 percent with a six county total of 1,944.



1988-89 Deer Season Forecast

Deer hunting regulations for the 1988 season will remain unchanged from 1987, since regulations adopted at that time were for a two-year period. However, two new deer management programs will no doubt help provide for an increase in the deer kill in some areas. These programs are the Damage Control Assistance Program (DCAP) and the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP). The DCAP program will provide for an increase in the deer harvest on lands where deer are causing serious crop damage problems, while the DMAP program will allow cooperators to increase the take of antlerless deer in areas where needed for herd management purposes. Both programs should complement established county regulations and provide

for reduced crop damage and healthier deer herds. However, the effects of these two new programs will be more dramatic in the east than in the west for the upcoming season.

West of the Blue Ridge, Game Division biologists are concerned about the effects of the acorn mast failure from last fall, not only on the quality of antler development but also on the survival of fawns. Nevertheless, District Biologist John Baker expects little or no change in the deer kill in the either-sex deer counties in his southwest district this fall. However, Baker does expect the "bucks only" counties in his area to continue to experience a significant increase over last year. District Biologist Al Guthrie is looking for a deer season similar to last year with a chance for a slight increase if

favorable conditions are realized.

In the central mountains, District Biologist Gary Norman reports that the percentage of fawns examined at technical checking stations during the 1987 season was down 7 percent and that poor mast production and severe winter weather may mean fewer yearling deer in 1988. Norman expects that the antlered buck harvest in his area west of the Blue Ridge may approach last season, while the antlerless harvest may increase slightly.

District Biologist Rod McClanahan, reporting on the northwest counties of the state, advises that he expects a 1988 deer harvest equal to or only slightly ahead of last season. McClanahan shares the concerns over poor mast crops and the decline in 1987 harvest from the record kill in 1986. McClanahan expects an increased deer harvest east of the Blue Ridge.

With almost a third of the statewide deer kill being provided by the southern Piedmont last year, Regional Biologist Jim Bowman has reason to predict excellent prospects for the 1988 season. District Biologist Chris Wheaton looks for continued increases in the eastern Piedmont and Biologist Jay

Jeffreys predicts a record harvest in the western Piedmont area.

Regional Biologist Fax Settle expects the Tidewater deer kill to increase slightly over last season as a result of the new DCAP and DMAP programs. South Tidewater Biologist Don Schwab believes that the 1988 season will be as good as last year or slightly better. Northern Tidewater Biologist Steve Brock feels that there is a strong possibility of another record harvest in his area for the third year in a row.

Black Bears

The black bear harvest in the Old Dominion increased for the fifth consecutive season with a record harvest of 568 animals, according to research biologist Dennis Martin. This represents an increase of 29 bears (5.4 percent) over last year's total of 539. Martin reports that the percent of females in the harvest has remained about the same at 202 females or 35.6 percent of the total harvest. This represents the lowest percentage of females in the total harvest since 1981 and may be the result of early denning due to a poor acorn mast crop in the fall of 1987. The best bear kill counties in 1987 were Rockingham (73),

Augusta (48), Albemarle (39), Madison (34), Page (34), Rappahannock (28), Bath (25), Giles (25), and Alleghany, Shenandoah and Warren with 24 bears each.

Fall Turkey Season

The 1987 fall turkey harvest of 16,157 established a new record for the season, surpassing the previous record set in 1982 by more than 2,700 birds (20 percent increase). This also represented a 3,678 bird increase (29.5 percent) over the 1986 fall season. The 1987 fall record was the result of excellent turkey production in the eastern portion of the state, coupled with a more liberal seasonal bag limit. The statewide fall harvest for 1987 averaged approximately one wild turkey for every one and one-half square miles of forested range. Top fall turkey counties in 1987 were Bedford (566), Botetourt (478), Buckingham (471), Pittsylvania (468), Halifax (441), Franklin (428), Caroline (396), Amherst and Giles (388 each), Frederick (367) and Albemarle (359). Reports from Game Division biologists statewide indicate a successful turkey nesting and rearing season and that conditions appear favorable for another



another excellent, if not record, season.

Spring Turkey Season

The 1989 spring gobbler season has been set for April 8 through May 13. This is basically a five-week season with an "extra" Saturday tacked on, and represents the same length season as in the spring of 1988. The 1988 spring gobbler kill of 7,041 established a new record for the spring, and prospects for 1989 appear good at this time. The 1988 spring turkey harvest exceeded the previous spring kill by 20 percent and represents the fourth year in a row for a record harvest. Top counties in 1988 were Franklin (234), Scott (181), Bedford (178), Sussex (178), Carroll (159), Westmoreland (154), Caroline (150), Giles (150), Amherst (148), Alleghany (140) and Halifax (137).

Bobwhite Quail

Irvin Kenyon, Wildlife Management Area Supervisor, reports that results from the 1987 season indicate that Virginia's bobwhite population made a noticeable comeback. State-wide, among hunters surveyed, the number of quail harvested increased by 18 percent and coveys found were up by 10 percent compared to last year. The Tidewater region again proved to be the most productive, however, the Piedmont region experienced the greatest improvement over last year. These regions are expected to provide the best quail hunting opportunities during the 1988 season. Quail hunters in northern Virginia and in the western mountains did not experience the same improvement, and in fact reported finding fewer birds. However, chances for the modest increase over last season seems good.

Ruffed Grouse

According to Wildlife Biologist Supervisor Joe Coggin, the 1988 ruffed grouse season should be a good one! Coggin bases his prediction on the grouse production data for the past four years, which has shown favorable percentages of juveniles in the total grouse harvest ranging from 40.5 percent to 45.9 percent. Barring poor nesting success, grouse hunters can look forward to finding more birds

this fall.

Squirrels

A virtual statewide oak mast crop failure (the worst on record) in 1987 and a poor mast crop in 1986 means that Old Dominion squirrel hunters are faced with a "hard luck" season in 1988. While there will be local exceptions, the general forecast is for reduced squirrel numbers, accompanied by a reduction in hunting success. Squirrel hunters should be prepared to spend time scouting prior to the season and should concentrate efforts in areas which provided other sources of mast (hickory, beech, etc.) for squirrels last year. Early season hunting in those counties where available may well offer the best hunting opportunities for squirrels in 1988.

Rabbits

Rabbit hunters should look to the Piedmont and Tidewater areas for the best hunting opportunities this fall. District Biologist John Baker and Regional Supervisor Mack Walls both indicate that rabbit production does not look favorable in the southwest region of the state (Bland, Grayson, Wythe and all counties further west). District Biologist Al Guthrie gives a slightly more favorable report for his district, which includes Carroll, Pulaski, Floyd, Montgomery, Giles, Craig, Botetourt and Roanoke. Jay Jeffreys, district biologist in the west Piedmont, reports that the number of rabbits observed in his district are up, and that prospects appear very good for this fall. District Biologists Steve Brock (north Tidewater) and Don Schwab (south Tidewater) report good rabbit production in eastern Virginia and that the 1988 rabbit season should be even better than last year.

Woodcock

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, daily hunting success for woodcock in the Eastern region increased 10.5 percent, from 1.9 woodcock bagged per day in 1986 to 2.1 birds harvested per day in 1987. Seasonal success in the East increased 27.4 percent from 8.4 birds per season to 10.7 woodcock per hunting

season in 1987. While the breeding population index increased slightly (2.3 percent) over 1987, the index still remains below the long-term average and is declining at a rate of 2.2 percent per year. Age ratio data from harvested woodcock indicated that productivity in the East declined from 1.9 to 1.7 immatures per adult female between 1986 and 1987.

Mourning Doves

Research Supervisor Jack Gwynn reports that the number of doves heard on call-count surveys in 1988 increased 7.5 percent over the number heard in 1987. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service advises that call-count survey data for the entire Eastern dove management unit (27 Eastern states) indicates a significant increase (11.8 percent) in the number of birds heard over the previous year. Crop harvest schedules in Virginia will be similar to last year and the number of acres planted in corn is the same as last year, at 550,000 acres. The 1987 dove season was a good one and Virginia dove hunters can expect that the 1988 season will be as good or better.

Waterfowl

Supervising Wildlife Biologist Fax Settle reports that nesting conditions in the Arctic were favorable for Atlantic brant, greater snow geese and tundra swans. Normal nesting conditions were experienced in the Ungava area of northern Quebec where many of the Atlantic population of Canada geese nest. While only average Canada goose production is expected this season, this will represent a substantial improvement over the two previous seasons of poor nesting success for Canada geese. Settle also reports that the outlook for the duck season is not good, although wood duck numbers in the Atlantic Flyway are believed to be good. Drought in the U.S. and Canadian prairie waterfowl production areas will adversely affect the fall flight numbers. Virginia waterfowl hunters will likely face double-barreled dilemma of reduced waterfowl production and more conservative regulations regarding the taking of waterfowl in the 1988 season.

It also tends to funnel the birds, since ducks like to have other ducks around them. They are less likely to land on one side or the other of the shooting lane than they would be if the hunter had simply put his decoys out in two clumps.

You might notice in the diagram that one of the decoys is facing away from the others. Most people tie the decoys so that they face one way—into the wind or current. I have rarely seen puddle ducks at rest or feeding when every duck in the raft faced in the same direction. Ducks that are all facing one way are usually fighting heavy currents or going somewhere, or they are frightened or suspicious and are getting ready to leave. Plop six mallards down on any farm pond and one or two of them will be gabbling

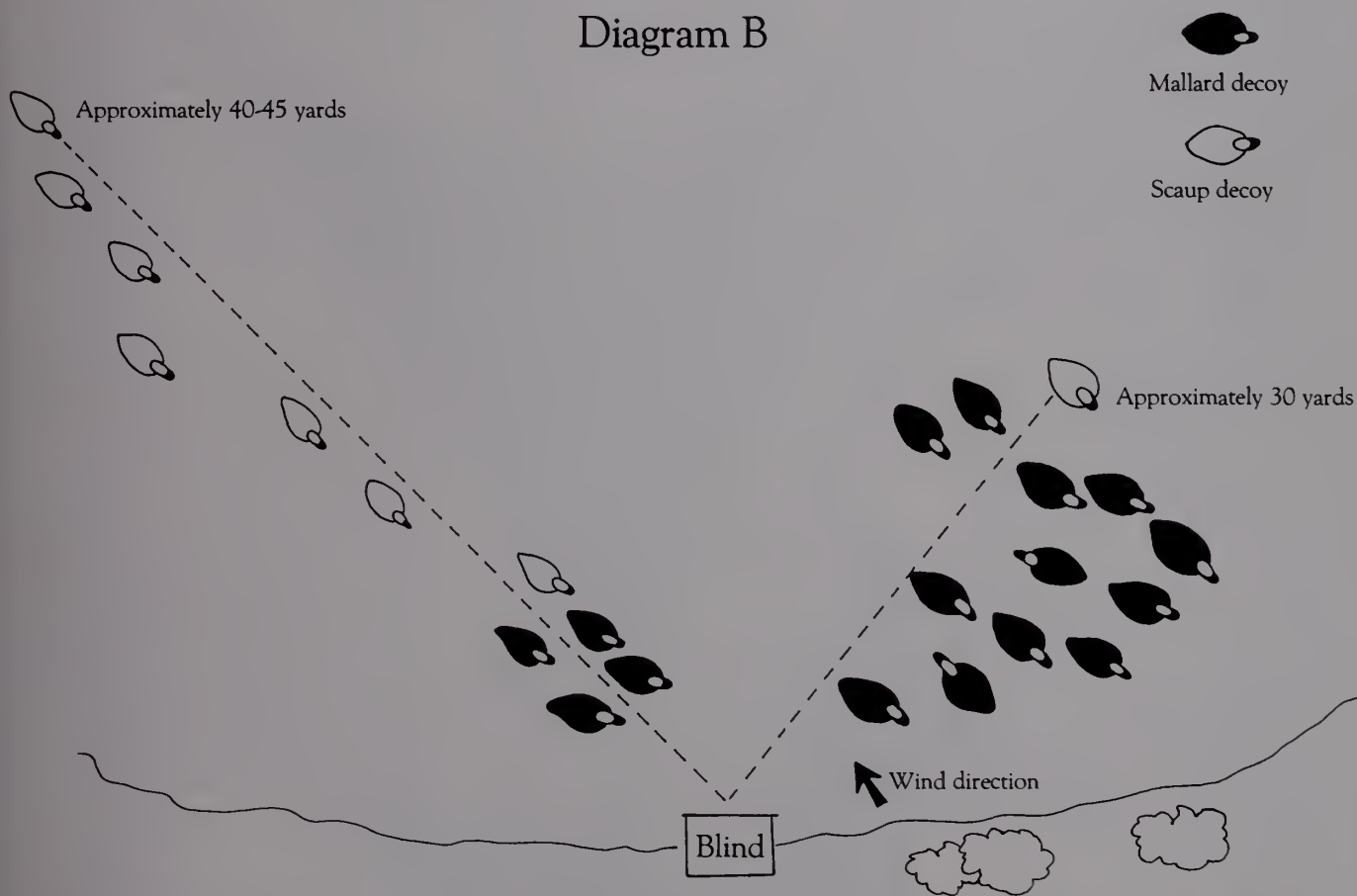
about, swimming in a little circle, having a private conversation. In any decoy spread, large or small, I tie about one mallard decoy in six “backwards,” so that it will face in its own direction. It looks more natural to me, and I have accumulated evidence in the form of many duck dinners to suggest that it looks more natural to the birds.

Hunting inland reservoirs like Smith Mountain, Kerr (Buggs Island), or Gaston demand a different sort of approach to decoy handling. The approach also works well along the shorelines of the great tidal rivers in eastern Virginia. The differences involve a much greater number of decoys, the necessity to pay closer attention to wind direction, and the possibility of attracting more different

varieties of waterfowl. Furthermore, the spread must get the attention of birds which might be hundreds of yards away.

Merely using lots of decoys is a help in attracting the attention of distant ducks. Obviously, it is easier to overlook a dozen decoys sitting off a point than it is to overlook two or three dozen. Furthermore, ducks over big water frequently fly in larger groups than ducks over beaver ponds. A single duck will almost always come in to a good spread of from six to a dozen decoys. Two ducks will very often come in, and three or four may at least give you a close pass. Larger groups are more likely to go somewhere else and start their own party. Give them a good spread of three dozen artfully arranged blocks, though, and they’ll

Diagram B



circle once or twice, cup those beautiful wings, and come whistling in.

Oversized blocks are a help at attracting attention, but I don't believe they're a substitute for numbers and positioning. Another help is the presence of some divers in the decoy rig. Diving ducks—scaup, cans, redheads, buffleheads, and the like—tend to have great splashes of white on them which show up while they are at rest. Oversized scaup decoys are almost as attention-getting as strobe lights; they draw the notice of any species flying overhead.

A large-scale version of the "V" pattern used for ponds will work on bigger bodies of water if the water is shallow for some distance out from shore. This is rarely the case in the reservoirs where I usually hunt, however, and handling 40 feet of decoy line in cold weather is not my idea of fun. Besides, there's a better way.

Diagram "B," illustrates a set-up which has worked consistently for me on points and along shorelines in large reservoirs, as well as in open water in large Eastern rivers. The greater the likelihood that I will be shooting mostly divers, the more decoys I will use, though putting out more than about three dozen along a shoreline is sometimes difficult. The set doesn't work well with less than 18 blocks, and I ordinarily use from two to three dozen, with divers constituting about a third of the pattern.

The diagram shows 24 birds, eight of them scaup. Wind direction will influence the placement of the long line of divers in relation to the mallard blocks, and wind blowing into the face of the hunter will pretty well ruin the effectiveness of the rig. It is best then to relocate on the opposite shore, or, if that is not feasible, to find a cove and place the decoys at an angle to the wind. The arrangement in the diagram is ideal for a wind blowing right-to-left or from behind the blind—though in the latter case the divers can be made to angle more sharply toward the deep water. For a left-to-right wind, merely reverse the pattern.

The design of this rig is a variation of the "J" or "fishhook" rig set up to make maximum use of both divers

*"Diving ducks . . .
are especially fond of
flying along the edge
of something—of
virtually anything."*

and puddle duck decoys. Diving ducks (and, to a lesser extent, puddle ducks too) are especially fond of flying along the edges of something—of virtually anything. They will follow a wave line, a grass line, an ice line, or—in this case—a line of decoys, which they take for a line of other divers. I once hunted an off-shore blind on a marrow-freezing day in January, when the shallow water just shoreward of the blind was iced over. The line of ice, which actually touched one corner of the blind, ran nearly straight for as far as I could see, and it looked as though every duck in the Atlantic Flyway buzzed right by me. I could see great flocks get up out in the bay, and they would head for that ice line and fly along it as if it had been a freeway. I almost could have taken those ducks with a tennis racket. It was a beautiful sight, and it was also the most graphic demonstration I have ever seen of divers' desire to follow some sort of line.

A half-dozen or so scaup placed in a long, irregular single file will provide precisely the kind of line divers love to follow. Don't worry about divers sitting down beyond the farthest decoy. They will follow the line into the wind, and if you're at the end of the line, they will be in range. The cup or "hook" of the pattern will isolate a clear area in front of the blind for landing. Birds in the hook should be predominantly mallards or other puddlers, unless you are hunting divers exclusively (which is unlikely on an inland reservoir).

One or two divers can be at the outer edge of the hook. Their black

and-white bodies will help draw attention from a distance, and their placement beyond the mallards in deeper water is more natural for mixed, sitting groups of ducks.

Furthermore, mallards coming in are more likely to try to sit down with other mallards than they are with the divers, so they will avoid the water beyond your decoy spread, where they would be out of range, and instead plop down in front of the blind with their buddies. Birds of a feather, and all that. They are also unlikely to land beyond the point or bend of the hook into the wind, because to do so would force them to make a final approach over the heads of a dozen decoys.

In other words, the long "J" design of divers and puddlers works so well because it attracts attention, funnels birds along the arm of the "J," and then virtually compels both diving ducks and puddle ducks to pass over or land in the open water inside the hook, well within range of the hunter. You don't need heavy magnum loads to be a successful hunter on big reservoirs; you just need to know how to handle decoys. And how to shoot. A duck that senses something wrong as it comes screaming in toward that open hole can be as hard to hit as any target nature can dish up, even if it is only 35 yards away.

Nothing is infallible, and there are days when no decoy rig seems to work. On those days you can enjoy watching whatever ducks fly by, or you can think about how nice it is to be sitting in a duck blind instead of working, or you can even take up the decoys and go fishing. One of the things you will not have to worry about, though, is whether your rig is attractive to ducks, or whether it will be effective if a duck should decide to investigate. The two patterns discussed here, while certainly not foolproof, are as likely to place ducks in range as any I have ever seen. You don't even need a call that sounds like a 1934 Packard. □

Steve Ausband is the chairman of the English Department of Averett College in Danville, and is a frequent contributor to Virginia Wildlife.

The Boone and Crocket Club

by Bob Gooch

Its number one priority
is not big game trophies



Illustrations from Hunting Trips of a Ranchman by Theodore Roosevelt.

“That one will make the book!”

The happy Virginia hunter slapped his partner on the back and raced toward the big buck he had just downed with a well-placed shot from his rifle.

The “book,” of course, is *Records of North American Big Game*, the official records of the prestigious Boone and Crockett Club, one of America’s oldest conservation clubs. Earning a place in it is one of hunting’s highest honors.

But a conservation club? It was the first national conservation society devoted to game animals. In fact, big game records were probably far from his mind in 1887 when Teddy Roosevelt returned to New York following a two-year stint as a frontier rancher in the Badlands of North Dakota. The old Rough Rider, big game hunter, conservationist, soldier, and 26th President of the United States had witnessed first hand the rapidly declining big game populations in the West, particularly the near extermination of the once magnificent herds of bison. And he was especially concerned about poaching in the recently created Yellowstone National Park.

Action was needed. Badly.

Though he had returned East to resume his writing and pick up the pieces of a budding political career, these problems weighed heavily on the sharp mind of the bespectacled Roosevelt. They tugged at him constantly. Late that year he called a New York meeting of some of the nation’s leading explorers, military leaders, political leaders, scientists, and writers—influential men with a common interest in western big game hunting. Out of that meeting came the Boone and Crockett Club, a small but powerful organization, its principal function being to fight for the preservation of the big game of North America.

But what about all of those big game records? Is that not the popular conception of Boone and Crockett?

Today, perhaps, but it was a half century later that the Club got around to this popular program. Its first book, published in 1932, listed a few specimens judged by a simple criteria of



length and spread of antlers, horns, and skulls.

“It wasn’t until after World War II that the Club got into competitive judging,” says W. Harold Nesbitt, executive director of the Boone and Crockett Club. In 1947, the Club held its first official ranking of outstanding big game trophies, using a series of measurements that were further refined in 1950, and still used today.

The recognition and registration of outstanding big game trophies, awards banquets, and the presentation of Boone and Crockett big game medals remains an important part of the Club’s various programs, and possibly its most visible.

The big game records maintained over the years have become a valuable source of information for big game hunters, wildlife managers, students of big game populations, and others. These records are published periodically in a handsome hardcover book called *Records of North American Big Game*. The ninth edition, due out this year, lists 10,000 trophies. It is one of a number of interesting and informative books published by the Club. All are on sale at the Club’s national headquarters in Dumfries, Virginia.

Born in New York a hundred years ago, the Club will celebrate its Centennial Anniversary in the Old Dominion. Originally headquartered in New York City, moved later to Pennsylvania, and then to Washington, D.C., the Boone and Crockett Club’s national headquarters is now located in Dumfries, near the Quantico Marine Corps Base. It seems an appropriate place to house an organization that honors the name of Daniel Boone.

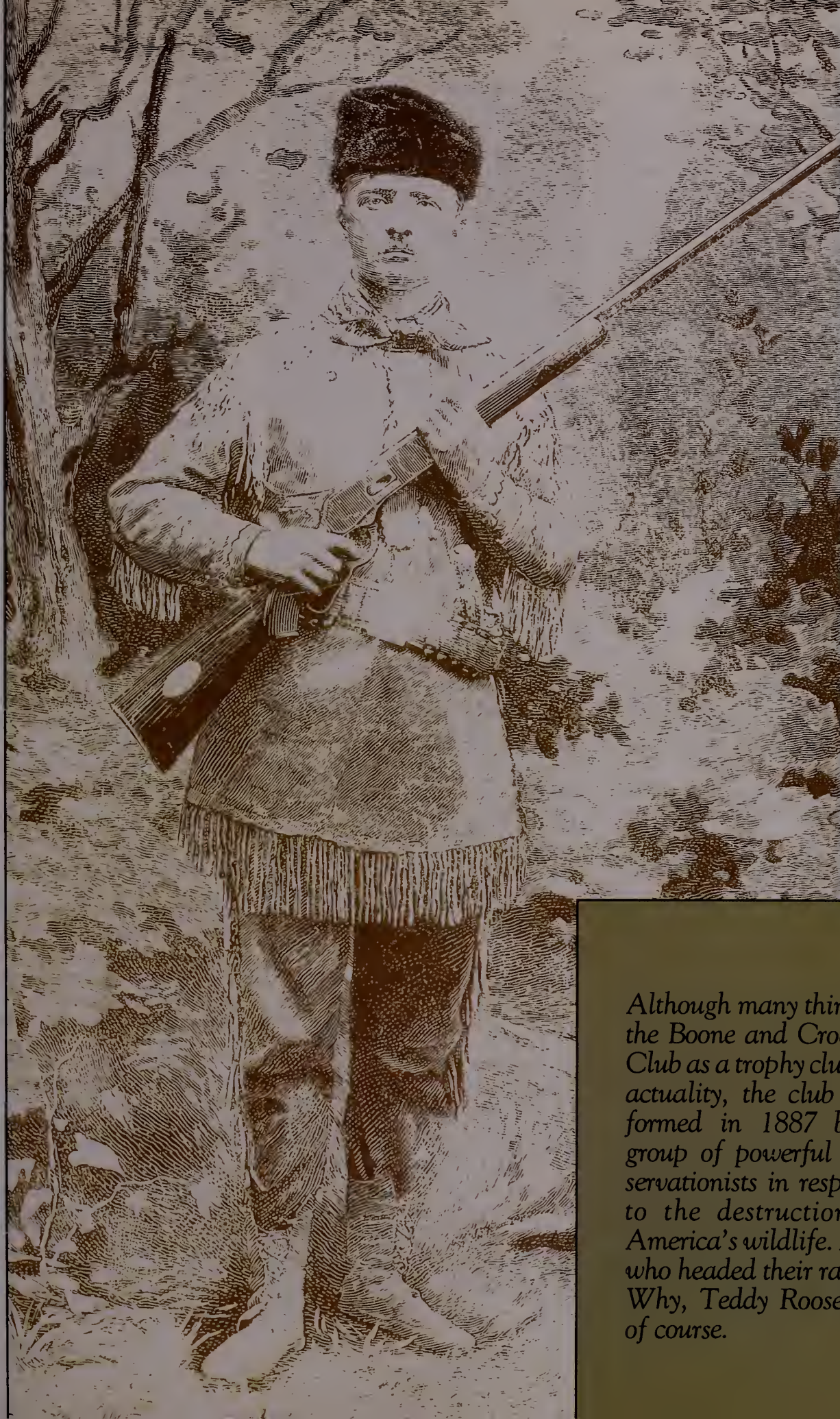
Though born in Pennsylvania of Quaker parents, Boone moved south to North Carolina at an early age. It was from there that he explored Southwest Virginia, lost a son during an Indian raid in the Clinch River Valley, and eventually established a route to Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap. Davy Crockett, like Boone, a daring and famous frontiersman, was a native of neighboring Tennessee.

From the first, membership in the Boone and Crockett Club was limited. This permitted in-depth discussion of problems and quick action on them. Initially 100 members, the cap on regulars has since been raised to 150. “There are seven or eight in Virginia,” said Nesbitt. The early members were powerful men of their times, men like Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, George B. Grinnell (later a president of the club), Francis Parkman, Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz, novelist Albert Bierstadt, and General William Sherman. The complete politician, Roosevelt knew how valuable such men would be in bringing about the changes he felt were needed to assure the future of America’s once rich game resources. These 150 are the voting members, the members who chart the Club’s course. A prerequisite for such membership, then and now, is having successfully hunted at least one adult male of three species of American big game.

Influential people still fill its ranks, men like Jack Parker, chief executive officer of General Electric, Dan Galbreath, owner of the Pittsburgh Pirates, and Russell E. Train, president of the World Wildlife Fund.

Professional members are chosen by the board of directors for distinguished contributions toward furthering the goals of the organization. Not necessarily hunters, these members come from the academic, natural resource, and scientific communities.

For the average hunter, however, interested in the activities of the Club and desirous of contributing as well as keeping abreast of its activities, there is the Boone and Crockett Club Associates program. Though they do not enjoy voting privileges, associates do



Although many think of the Boone and Crockett Club as a trophy club, in actuality, the club was formed in 1887 by a group of powerful conservationists in response to the destruction of America's wildlife. And who headed their ranks? Why, Teddy Roosevelt, of course.

Yes, there are some Boone and Crockett animals in Virginia. Exceptional white-tailed deer and black bear taken in the state have entered the annals of the famous hunting and conservation club since World War II. And, every new bear and deer season presents the interesting possibility for still another.

The official *Records of North American Whitetail Deer*, published by the Club in 1987 lists 7 typical Virginia whitetails and 3 non-typical ones. And 4 Old Dominion black bears have made the book. Unfortunately, other Virginia big game such as the popular wild turkey, the sika deer of Assateague Island, and the wild hogs of the Back Bay region are not recognized by Boone and Crockett.

But how do you know whether the fine black bear or the buck with that impressive rack will make the book? It's a question heard frequently in hunting circles.

First, don't panic. There's no hurry. An official measurement cannot be made until 60 days after the kill. So don't load your trophy up and head for the Boone and Crockett Club headquarters in Dumfries. In the meantime, you can make a preliminary measurement yourself using the official score chart and a 1/4 inch wide, flexible steel measuring tape. Scoring charts are available from the Boone and Crockett Club, 241 South Fraley Boulevard, Dumfries, Virginia 22026, telephone 703/221-1888. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Or better still, order the book *Measuring and Scoring North American Big Game Trophies* from that address. It's a handsome book selling for \$15. Become an associate member at \$20 per year, and you will get a 20 percent discount on it.

If your preliminary scoring indicates your animal is worthy of more careful scrutiny, contact the Boone and Crockett Club and ask for the names of official scorers in your area. There are over a dozen in Virginia. Remember, however, that these people serve without pay and at their own

Will It Make The Book?



expense, so be considerate in making your request.

If your trophy qualifies, the scorer will sign and date the scoring chart. The original copy must be sent to Boone and Crockett headquarters with a \$25 registration fee.

Other documents you will need are clear photos of the front, left, and right sides of your trophy (antlers if it's a deer and the dried skull if it's a bear), a completed Hunter, Guide and Hunt

Information form, a notarized signature of the Fair Chase Statement, and a copy of your hunting license and bear or deer tag which you attached to your animal. The Hunter, Guide and Hunt Information form and the Fair Chase Statement are available from Boone and Crockett headquarters.

Assuming your trophy makes the book, it will join the following Old Dominion trophy bear and deer:

Black bear scoring 21 8/16 taken by Joseph R. Lam in Augusta County in 1977.

Black bear scoring 21 7/16 taken by Grover F. Stiles in Albemarle County in 1964.

Black bear scoring 21 5/16 taken by Richard L. Merchant in Rockbridge County in 1953.

Black bear scoring 20 6/16 taken by Samuel Cooksey in Warren County in 1984.

Typical white-tailed deer scoring 178 3/8 taken by Edward W. Fielder in Goochland County in 1981.

Typical white-tailed deer scoring 177 2/8 taken by Donald W. Houser in Augusta County in 1963.

Typical white-tailed deer scoring 176 2/8 taken by George W. Beahm in Rappahannock County in 1959.

Typical white-tailed deer scoring 174 4/8 taken by Jerry C. Claybrook in Charlotte County in 1977.

Typical white-tailed deer scoring 173 4/8 taken by David H. Wolfe in Augusta County in 1957.

Typical white-tailed deer scoring 170 7/8 taken by Maurice Smith in Bath County in 1953.

Typical white-tailed deer scoring 170 1/8 taken by Lloyd Lam in Massanutten Mountains in 1955.

Non-typical white-tailed deer scoring 216 5/8 taken by Peter F. Crocker, Jr. in Isle of Wight County in 1963.

Non-typical white-tailed deer scoring 216 3/8 taken by William E. Schaefer in Powhatan County in 1970.

Non-typical white-tailed deer scoring 211 7/8 taken by Dorsey O. Breeden in Rockingham County in 1966.

receive the quarterly newsletter and discounts on Club books and other publications. Annual dues are currently \$20.

Over the years, the Boone and Crockett Club has included among its members such conservationists as Gifford Pinchot, father of American forestry, Stephen Mather, founder of the National Park system, and the great conservationist Aldo Leopold.

The Club's accomplishments over the years are impressive, but because of its low-key approach to major conservation problems, its role in many of these projects is not generally known.

For example: The Club was instrumental in enacting the Yellowstone Park Protective Act of 1895. A concern that prompted Teddy Roosevelt to call that first meeting in New York City, it gave federal officials the right to make arrests, and represented a major step toward the establishment of the National Park Service.

In cooperation with the New York Zoological Society and the American Bison Society, the Club helped establish and stock such early buffalo sanctuaries as the National Bison Range. With regular members such as Secretary of the Interior Schurz, the club pioneered early moves toward the creation of the national forest system. Club member Gifford Pinchot was the first Chief Forester of the United States, and most who followed him have been either regular or associate members.

The Boone and Crockett Club was a leader in the establishment of our sprawling system of national wildlife refuges, four of which are located in Virginia. And it drafted the first game laws for Alaska when it was still a territory.

The list of accomplishments goes on and on. Even a hundred years seems little time to have accomplished so much. The American Waterfowlers, an offshoot of the Club, was the antecedent of Ducks Unlimited. Boone and Crockett, in cooperation with the Audubon Society, conceived and financed the Charles Sheldon National Antelope Range in Nevada, a move that played a prominent role in reestablishing the pronghorn antelope

throughout most of its native range.

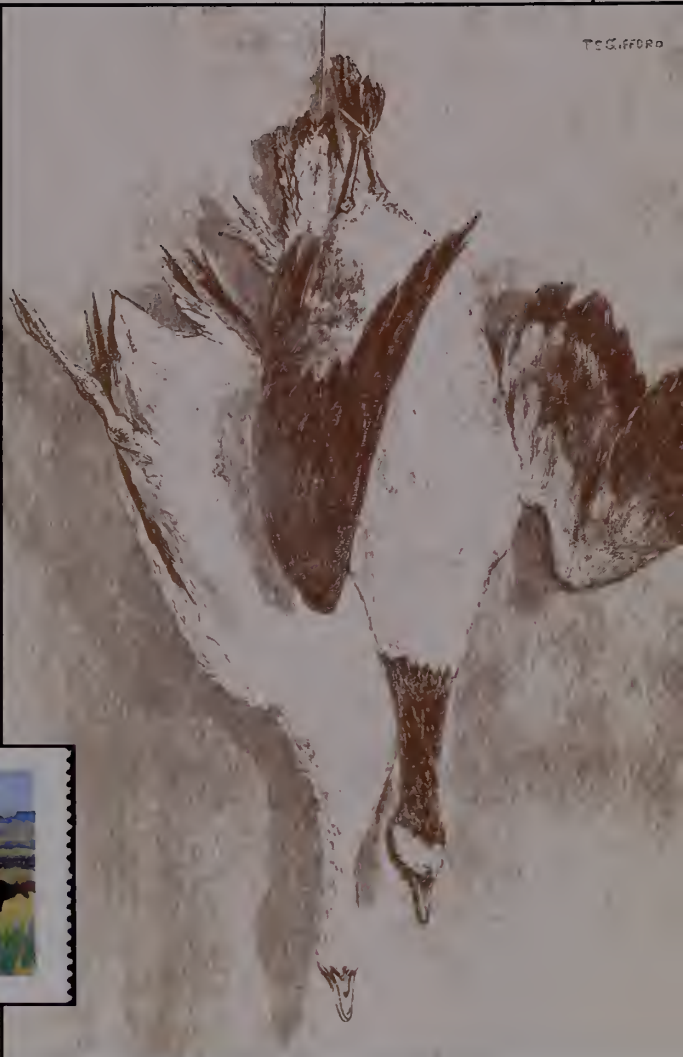
Want more?

How about the Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge in Florida, desert bighorn sheep in the Big Bend region of Texas, the moose-wolf relationship

Prints program has produced over \$200,000 since its inception in 1982.

A very recent accomplishment, and a major one in Boone and Crockett history, was the 1987 purchase of 6,000 acres of prime big game winter-

The Boone and Crockett Club has contributed significantly to wildlife conservation for 100 years, and with the 1982 production of an annual conservation stamp, has been able to raise over \$200,000 for the cause.



study in Isle of Royale National Park under Dr. Durward Allen, and the long-term studies of grizzly bears in and adjacent to Yellowstone National Park.

Since World War II, with the federal and state governments assuming needed and greater roles in wildlife management, the Club has moved toward the support of research projects. There have been over 100 such projects.

Operating funds come from dues (regular members pay \$300 annually), donations, and the sale of books and other publications. The Boone and Crockett Conservation Stamps and

ing habitat on the famed east front of the Rocky Mountains in Montana. Named the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch, it will be managed for its wildlife.

Hunting will play its traditional role in the management of the ranch. That's highly appropriate for an organization named for America's most famous and respected hunters. Hunting and conservation, it's a message the Boone and Crockett Club has been preaching for a hundred years. □

Bob Gooch is a well-known outdoor writer who has written several books on hunting and fishing, including the Virginia Hunting Guide and the Virginia Fishing Guide.

Deer Management in Virginia: *It only gets better*

by Spike Knuth

Today in Virginia, wildlife managers are in the happy situation of facing too much of a good thing with the state's thriving white-tailed deer population. Brought from near extinction in the early 1900s to its present abundance (and in certain places, overabundance), wildlife biologists are now enjoying the flexibility of introducing different wildlife management techniques on a site-specific basis to manage for quality as well as quantity. Thus, this year, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries introduced two new deer management programs; one which provides relief to landowners for agricultural damage by deer, through hunter participation; and another which allows hunt clubs to manage for improved herd health of animals on the land they hunt.

The first program, called the Damage Control Assistance Program (DCAP), was developed as a hunting alternative to the traditional damage program. With whitetail populations numbering in excess of 600,000 in the state, wildlife-related damage to landowners has increased. Whitetails are responsible for browsing on a variety of crops such as corn, soybeans, peanuts, strawberries, and in orchards, as well as trodding upon prepared plant bedding areas, and even causing tree damage by rubbing trees during rut.

Up until now, the main methods used to curtail crop damage was through the issuing of crop damage permits, that allow the farmer to shoot animals during the crop season, at the time the damage is at its peak. And, in fact, the Game Department is required

The Game Department is adopting two new deer management techniques that will refine its already successful program, and provide additional opportunities for the hunter and landowner.

Opposite page: photo by William S. Lea

by law to control agricultural crop damage by the issuance of such kill permits. But, carrying out this duty has left much to be desired in the eyes of landowners and hunters. Taking care of a deer problem requires time, which, during the crop growing season, is hard for a farmer to come by. In addition, most of the deer killed with damage permits have been taken in the summer months, causing hard feelings among the people who hunt deer on the land during the regular hunting season. This is especially true where potential trophy bucks are being singled out to fill damage permits, instead of the more numerous does.

With the DCAP program, landowners will still receive damage seals as they are warranted, based on the investigations of the local game warden. But for the first time, landowners will be able to issue these damage seals to hunters during the deer hunting season, which they in turn match with

special purpose tags. Not only does this alternative maximize hunter participation and bring the kill into the regular hunting season, but it provides site-specific relief by harvesting deer in "hot spots" where there are serious crop depredation problems.

The rules to be followed with the damage control tags are as follows:

1. Damage control seals are valid during all open deer seasons including archery, general firearms and muzzleloader seasons for the license year issued.
2. Damage control seals are valid only on the designated control area of the permit.
3. Landowners may issue damage control seals to hunters of their choice who possess a valid special purpose tag "A" on their big game license and other hunters that are not legally required to have a deer-bear-turkey license.
4. Deer of either-sex may be harvested with the use of the damage control seal and the special purpose tag "A" on the deer-bear-turkey license. However, in order to provide maximum herd control, farmers are encouraged to require hunters to harvest antlerless deer.
5. Damage control seals can only be used to validate the special purpose tag "A" on the hunter's big game license during the season issued.
6. Successful hunters must validate the special purpose tag "A" by affixing the damage control seal to the special purpose tag "A" and attaching it to the carcass. The deer must be presented to an authorized game checking station as prescribed by law. Landowners and others that are not required to have a deer-bear-turkey license must present a damage control seal to the big game check station to be affixed to the middle copy of the big game check card.
7. A successful hunter must report the





In two new Game Department deer management programs, hunters and landowners can benefit from increased hunting opportunities and site-specific relief from crop damage; photo by Roy Edwards.

- harvest of any deer to the landowner by completing the harvest record portion of the damage control seal and returning it to the landowner.
8. Unsuccessful hunters must return unused damage control seals to the landowner by the close of the deer season.
9. The landowner is to account for all damage control seals issued and must return (via postage paid envelope) all unused and used seals so that a harvest report can be prepared by the Department within two weeks of the close of the deer season.

The second program, the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP), was developed in response to a growing interest among hunt clubs in taking an active role in the management of deer herds on the land they hunt. Big racks and bigger deer are always desirable, and with deer herds flourishing, there was no reason not to institute a program which would help landowners and hunt clubs work with the Game Department to manage specific deer herds. Historically, though, the Game Department has managed the deer in Virginia on a county by county basis, which means that bag limits and seasons are established for each county, and not for individual areas.

So, with DMAP, the Game Department hopes to establish a cooperative

relationship with interested landowners and hunt clubs and develop individual deer management programs on a site by site basis. The DMAP cooperators will set their own deer management goals, such as more trophy bucks and bigger deer, and then collect biological information on the deer they kill. In turn, wildlife biologists from the Game Department will analyze this data and provide landowners and clubs with the facts necessary to make informed management decisions.

As part of this program, antlerless deer permits will be issued for certain areas where wildlife biologists believe they are necessary for reaching management goals, and often these permits will allow for a larger antlerless harvest than might be possible under general statewide regulations. However, antlerless deer permits will be issued only where needed for herd control as determined by an analysis of the required biological data.

In order to participate, a club or landowner must apply to the district wildlife biologist in their area prior to August 1 of each year. All new program participants will be required to collect deer harvest data as specified by the Department for one hunting season prior to becoming eligible for DMAP antlerless deer tags. The appli-

cation for DMAP must be accompanied by two copies of a map of the area to be included in the program that is of sufficient detail to allow the area's boundaries to be readily determined. Cooperators must also have exclusive deer hunting rights to all lands they enroll in DMAP. Each cooperator shall be required to furnish a written statement of the deer management objectives for their land in the program. Approval of the application shall be at the discretion of the Department.

To date, the most economical way to manage deer numbers is through sport hunting. While the Department's county by county management plan has maintained the health and quality of Virginia's deer herd, the DCAP and DMAP programs will allow the Department to refine its strategies and improve upon an already successful system of wildlife management.

For more information and a complete listing of the general criteria for both the DMAP and DCAP programs write to:

DMAP/DCAP Program
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
4010 West Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23230-1104.

Spike Knuth is the publications supervisor for the Department.

Letters

Congratulations

I am writing in reference to the article by Gary Burnett, Ruckersville, VA in your June 1988 issue and its title "Farmers Objection." I am in agreement with him 100 percent and I'm passing on the article to my friends to read and pass on.

Congratulations to Mr. Burnett on a well-written letter and expressing the feelings of so many people.

Next, I'm renewing my subscription to one of the best magazines published.

Louise B. Reynolds
Mineral

July Issue

The cover photo of the white-tailed deer on your July issue, by William S. Lea, is a masterpiece of subject and environment. Absolutely beautiful!

Also, the photo of the wild turkey with poults, by Rob Simpson. How does he do it? I have fished and hunted in the Virginia mountains for over 60 years and I have never even seen a wild turkey with "chicks," as we used to call them.

Furthermore, don't sneeze at the photo of the weasel, also by Simpson, on inside back cover. That little critter is just as ornery as he looks in the photo!

C.B. Cushing
Bowling Green

The Controversy Continues

I am a resident of eastern Pennsylvania and only have received a few copies of *Virginia Wildlife*. Up until now I enjoyed it, but thought it was a little "middle of the road." Let me explain.

In your June issue, "The Editor's Page," written by Virginia Shepherd, I wholeheartedly agree with her stand

and what should be all hunters' stand! I, too, stand guilty of not voicing "the facts" as often as I should. I live in a very populated area in Pennsylvania, 40 miles north of Philadelphia, and if you think you have people that are ignorant of the facts, you should hear what is said to me.

I do think that most hunters would use the facts, if indeed they had them all. What I suggest is a "fact sheet" on the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937, that we could use.

Also, in the "Letters" section, I read the letter from Kay Glymph that was filled with misinformation, misconceptions and basic ignorance. I was indeed glad when Virginia responded to her with a factual, straightforward answer!

Keep up the good work; you now have a subscriber for life. Possibly a new resident.

P.S. In response to Mr Burnett's letter "Farmers Objections."

I wholeheartedly agree, and can relate—Bucks County, my home, was farm land only 20 years ago, but now is reduced to little more than a suburb.

Kenny Isler
New Hope, PA

Thanks for the compliments. In an upcoming issue of Virginia Wildlife, we will take your suggestion and produce a "fact sheet" on the sportsman's contribution to the restoration and conservation of America's wildlife.—Editor

Thank you for your strong reply to the reader who cancelled her subscription upon learning that *Virginia Wildlife* supports the regulated hunting and fishing of our fish and game.

I'm sure your reply summed up the feelings of a great many of Virginia's sportsmen.

I am proudly enclosing a check to

extend my subscription for another three years.

John Popovich
Herndon

Please renew my subscription to your fine magazine. I have been lax about reading your magazine because of a recent move, but I was prompted by K. Glymph's letter on your "Letters" page in the June issue to write and, especially, renew my subscription.

Not being a Virginia native by birth, but by marriage, and now in Maryland because of my husband's military service, I took offense at Ms. Glymph's "walking in country fields . . . and as of yet (not) having experienced the thrill of seeing these extraordinary birds in their natural habitat" (reference to the wild turkey).

I too, had never "seen" wild turkeys until my husband educated my eyes to "see" a superabundance of wildlife while teaching me to hunt. I have learned to track, and to see wildlife since joining him hunting. Prior to this I prided myself on being an avid naturalist and "country-lover." Thank God for hunters! A whole world has opened to me since I have been educated by my husband to look, and not just walk by wildlife.

I have seen the "flocks" and "gangs" of wild turkey Ms. Glymph has not—they are easy to miss, since the wild turkey is superb at blending into the undergrowth even when there are 15 of them!!

I have never written a letter to a magazine of any sort, but was angered by her anger at hunters and your fine publication. Keep up the good work and please find my check to keep it coming. But for her letter, I would have probably let my subscription lapse in the confusion of my move to Maryland.

Christina Gavel-Brunson
Drayden, MD

Letters

Piping Concern

I would like to comment on the article in the May issue of *Virginia Wildlife* on the piping plover (Field News).

I have read most every study that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has done on the piping plover, as well as the study that was conducted on Assateague National Seashore in 1987 by Fraser. These studies seem in agreement on one point, that the major cause of nest loss is predation (foxes, raccoons, and avian predators). High spring tides are also responsible for a great number of nest losses.

A great number of people read your magazine and consider the articles factual. A great number of people that I have discussed this article with find it disturbing, since they too have read the studies.

Most everyone is for protecting the piping plover. However, we are all entitled to the facts, and I am hoping that you will read these studies and correct your articles. Man is not the great culprit this time, and the public should be made aware of the facts.

Wanda Thornton
Chincoteague

We appreciate your views on our May plover article and your concern that all the facts be presented regarding the reasons for the species decline, and present threats to the plover.

In order for a species to be listed as threatened or endangered, the animals must be in grave danger of being lost from our Earth. Overwhelmingly, (as stated in the Federal Register and numerous references on population trends along the coast), the most important factor responsible for the decline of the piping plover is the impact that humans have had on both the habitat and population of this bird since the turn of the century.

Today, only a small portion of this species breeding habitat remains and virtually none is untouched by human

encroachment. Encroachment and development of our coast has resulted in a number of direct and indirect impacts to the plover: direct loss of habitat from construction, shoreline stabilization, recreation, and indirect loss through the artificially high predator populations, both wild and domestic, associated with the increased use of what little habitat is left.

Each limiting factor now is critical, and several, including predation, are being studied and monitored (as you indicate in your letter).

As you can see, however, the plovers' demise can be attributed to human impacts, and we must all play our role and take responsibility for its protection.

Karen Terwilliger
Nongame Wildlife Biologist
Member, Piping Plover Recovery Team

Dogwood Tips

I enjoyed Nancy Hugo's article on the dogwood in the Habitat section of the May issue. The dogwood is truly a natural treasure and one of the delights of living in Virginia.

I agree with Ms. Hugo that transplanting native dogwoods can be difficult, but I would like to share my experience with transplanting them, which I hope may be helpful to your readers.

Some years ago I built a house on what had previously been pasture land. I decided to make the dogwood the main theme in my landscaping. At first I simply dug up small dogwoods and moved them. Even though I watered them, I lost most of them the first summer. Then a neighbor, Robert Hale, was kind enough to enlighten me on the proper way to move them.

First of all, they must be dormant. I've found late November (around Thanksgiving) is a good time, as is March after the ground thaws.

Secondly, the tree must be pruned, but not cut back so much that all you

have is "shoots" coming up from the roots as suggested in Ms. Hugo's article. I select trees that are about as big around as my little finger and cut them off at a height of about three feet.

Thirdly, the newly transplanted trees need to be well mulched. I use pine needles for this purpose.

Finally, the trees should be watered thoroughly at least once a week the first season after transplanting.

When I move dogwoods, I prune them before I dig them up. That way you don't have a lot of branches in your face when you move them. Why move branches you are going to cut off anyway? Then I dig a circle about one foot in radius around the tree and simply lift it up with the spade, being careful to get as much soil as I can. You don't need to dig excessively deep, since dogwood roots are rather shallow. I usually transplant the tree using a large trash can and cover any exposed roots with moist leaves. I transplant just a few trees at a time to minimize the time they are out of the ground.

You must have a little patience with this method. If you're in a big hurry for blooms, you may need to buy trees from a nursery. However, if you don't mind waiting, you should have blooms the second or third year after transplanting. The initial pruning tends to produce an especially full and attractive tree.

One word concerning conservation and good common courtesy. Be sure to get the landowner's permission to dig dogwoods in his woods. Select trees that are going to be crowded if left where they are, and fill in any holes you dig.

I wish you much success and satisfaction in propagating this lovely tree that we Virginians proudly proclaim and acclaim as our own symbol of natural beauty.

Tom Earles
Culpeper

Safety

Upcoming Hunter Education Classes

Below are the hunter education classes that have been scheduled as of our press date. These 10-hour courses satisfy the mandatory hunter education requirement for all new hunters and those 12-15 years old. Contact the Richmond office of the Game Department at 804/367-1000 for more information and updates on any additional courses.

District 1—Central and South Central Virginia

Location: Virginia Game Dept.
Richmond Office

Date: Sept. 13, 14, & 15
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Phone: 804/367-1000

Location: Central Library,
Chesterfield County

Date: Sept. 27, & 28
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Date: Sept. 29
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Contact: Dave Folster
Phone: 804/748-1623

District 2—West Central Virginia

Location: Evington Ruritan Club,
Campbell County

Date: Sept. 7, 14, 21, & 28
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Contact: Milton Robertson
Phone: 804/821-4902

District 3—Southwest Virginia

Location: Wythe Recreation Center

Date: October 1
Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Date: Oct. 3, 4, & 6
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Contact: James Beavers
Phone: 703/637-3293

District 4—Northwest Virginia

Location: Jeffersonston Comm. Ctr.,
Culpeper County

Date: Sept. 27, 28, & 29
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Contact: D. Watts
Phone: (804) 825-4966

District 5—North and Northeastern Virginia

Location: Lake Anna State Park
Visitor Center,
Spotsylvania

Date: Sept. 9
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Date: Sept. 10 & 11
Time: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Contact: Lake Anna State Park

Location: Fairfax County Animal
Shelter

Date: Sept. 27, 28, & 29
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Contact: Mike Lucas
Phone: (703) 830-3310

District 6—Tidewater Virginia

Location: Northwest River Park
Chesapeake

Date: Sept. 6, 7, & 8
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Date: Sept. 13, 14 & 15
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Contact: Allen Crowder
Phone: (804) 421-7151

Location: VFW 1131 (Ocean View),
Norfolk

Date: Sept. 3
Time: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Contact: Ron Vogel (open to public)

Location: Old John Randolph School
Suffolk

Date: Sept. 6 & 8
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Date: Sept. 10
Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Contact: Mr. Greene 804/539-2110
or Mr. Sherman 539-2224

Location: Naval Air Station,
Norfolk, Bldg U-40 by
Gate 3

Date: Sept. 13 & 14
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Date: Sept. 15
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Contact: Bob Ludwig (walk in, no
need to sign up)

Location: Old John Randolph School
Suffolk

Date: Sept. 20 & 22
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Date: Sept. 24
Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Contact: Mr. Greene 804/539-2110
or Mr. Sherman 539-2224

Location: VA Beach Central Library
Conference Room B

Date: Sept. 24
Time: 8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Contact: Bob Ludwig (walk in, no
need to sign up)

Habitat

Nancy Hugo

Butterfly Weed

It may be something of an overstatement to say it's easier to attract hummingbirds than butterflies to the garden, but there's also some truth to it. Butterflies are more specialized than hummingbirds in their requirements and many of them require not only special flowers to meet their nectar requirements but special plants for their caterpillars. The caterpillar stage of the great fritillary butterfly, for example, feeds only on violet leaves. The larval stage of a monarch butterfly feeds exclusively on milkweeds.

According to wildlife gardener John Dennis, it's the lack of larval foods that is responsible for the lack of butterflies in many urban and suburban areas. Letting a small area of our gardens grow wild will often help provide some of these foods. Some larval food plants to encourage include clovers, vetches, violets, and mildweeds. Wood plants like wild cherry, hackberry, oak, elm, willow poplar and ash also feed the larval stages of some butterfly species. In trying to provide habitat for butterfly caterpillars, it's also important to go easy on pesticides. The pesticide BT, for example, will kill any leaf-eating caterpillar, not just the ones you don't want.

One of our most beautiful native wildflowers provides food for both larval and adult butterflies. It's called butterfly weed, and it's a must in any butterfly garden. You may have spotted it along the roadside, because it's what my husband calls a "turnaround flower"—one so showy it's worth turning the car around to go back and see it again.

Butterfly weed, a member of the milkweed family, is a perennial, 1-3 feet tall, with flat clusters of yellow, red or orange (usually orange) flow-

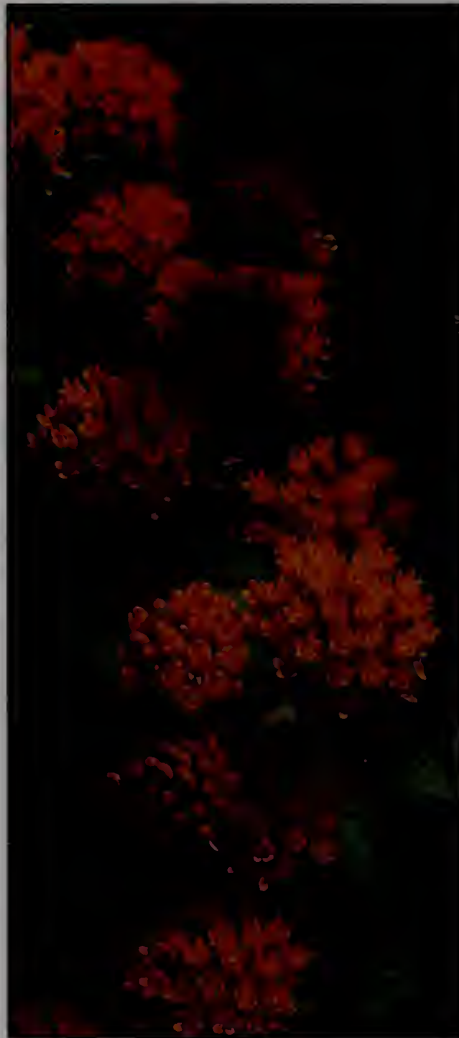


photo by Janet Shaffer

ers. Not only are the flowers filled with nectar but their flat surface provides a perfect landing area for butterflies. In the summer, a butterfly weed without a monarch butterfly on it is as unusual as a beach without a bather. These basking butterflies are actually soaking up heat from the sun which will raise their body temperatures and give them the power for flight.

Growing butterfly weed is easy, but it requires some patience. Whatever you do, don't try to dig butterfly weed up from the wild. Not only is it a conservation "no-no," but it doesn't work. Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) has a long, brittle tap root that does not like to be moved. The best way to get butterfly weed started in the garden is to grow it from seed or to buy small nursery-grown plants. My own experience has been that the plants are easy to start from seed, but they take two or three seasons to reach flowering size. Seeds and plants are available from Passiflora, Route 1, Box 190-A, Germantown, NC 27019.

Butterfly weed is drought tolerant and will grow in hot, dry problem areas where little else will grow. It does require well-drained soil, and like the butterflies who are attracted to it, it needs sun. Wildflower expert Harry Phillips recommends it as a good flower for roadsides and median strips because it recovers quickly from mowing. Butterfly weed mowed in May will be blooming by July. It also makes a wonderful plant to pop out in the middle of a plush green lawn where it's a magnet for both butterflies and curious neighbors. "I'm becoming a wildlife gardener," you can explain to the curious neighbors. The butterflies will need no explanation. □



Standing left to right: artist Ron Loque, Secretary of Natural Resources John Daniel, II, Governor Gerald Baliles, and Game Department Director James Remington; photo by Lee Walker.

Governor Receives Waterfowl Print

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries presented Governor Gerald L. Baliles with print and stamp number 1 of the state's new waterfowl stamp series on May 31 this year. Framed in antique walnut, this first print of the conservation edition represented the kickoff of a program designed to generate funds to benefit Virginia's waterfowl.

Subject of the 1988 "First of State" stamp/print is a pair of mallards painted by Virginia artist Ron Louque. Louque's art was chosen from 16 paintings by well-known artists in response to the Department's request for proposals. Born in New Orleans,

Louque now lives in Orange, Virginia, with his wife Linda and their children. Louque has won in open competition or has been directly commissioned to do 10 state print designs in the last few years, including the 1985 Ohio Duck Stamp, the 1986 Indiana Duck Stamp, the 1986 North Dakota Trout Stamp, the 1987 Louisiana Turkey Stamp, the 1987 and 1988 Florida Duck stamps, the 1988 North Carolina Sportsman License Print and the 1988 Duck Stamp.

The \$5 voluntary migratory waterfowl stamp will be used by the Game Department for the conservation of waterfowl in Virginia. The Game Div-

ision plans to develop and acquire critical waterfowl habitat in the state with the funds generated by this stamp/print program.

The stamp/print is available for purchase from galleries and framing shops throughout the country. There are over 200 such establishments in Virginia, and anyone of them will be able to supply this print which will be available in three editions. Duck Stamp prints and matching number stamps, however, will not be sold by the Game Department. □

Southeast Raptor Management Symposium and Workshop

The National Wildlife Federation and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University will host the Southeast Raptor Management Symposium and Workshop September 14-16 in Blacksburg. Symposium workshops will encourage participants to discuss regional issues related to raptors and to develop management recommendations.

The symposium is the fourth in a series of five regional symposia sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation's Institute for Wildlife Research. The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University is hosting this symposium. Proceedings of the symposium will be published as part of the Federation's Scientific and Technical Series.

For more information, contact the National Wildlife Federation, Institute for Wildlife Research, 1400 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-2266 or call 703/790-4268. □

Family Outdoors

Spike Knuth

First Hint of Fall

An overcast sky was streaked with soft grays as a light easterly wind brought rain in the form of a soft mist. Temperatures were in the mid-60s, and the first hint of the coming fall was in the air. Hundreds of martins and swallows lined utility wires, TV antennas and dead trees. Oddly, most of them sat facing the same way, rigid, like little soldiers in formation. From a distance, the many wires full of birds leading to a central point in the form of a pole, resembled some sort of giant necklace or a large spider web covered with dew drops. Many of the swallows were young birds, able to fly but still being fed by the parents. I watched as an adult barn swallow flew up face-to-face with a young bird, hovered for a brief period, and popped an insect into its mouth. The young tree swallows are distinguished by their brown upperparts. The greenish-blue coloration of adulthood will develop when they are on their wintering grounds in the Gulf States and Mexico.

Swallows and martins begin staging for migration in the latter part of August. Young-of-the-year inflate populations to large numbers and they gather almost anywhere they can sit together. Often, on cold mornings, they sit on the roofs of houses, soaking up what heat they can that was absorbed by the roofing during daylight hours. They are also drawn to heat rising from paved roads, as are the insects on which they feed, often resulting in the deaths of these swift fliers by automobiles. All day long they feed, hedge-hopping, swooping and diving—catching insects to keep their streamlined little bodies operating.

On a similar day one year, a strong wind blew off of Wisconsin's Lake Winnebago. Swallows and martins swarmed about in the wind and rain, like swirls of leaves, but generally in a disciplined group, as if being directed

by air traffic controllers. There were, however, always a few who preceded or trailed the main group. Their feeding "strategy" seemed to be to circle around, fly or coast into the wind over a wide expanse of lawn on the lee side of a group of large willows and cottonwoods along the shore. They'd coast in low over the clearing, catching insects that were being blown from the trees. I saw a similar sight in Hanover County along a row of magnolias that flanked a long gravel driveway to an old farm house.

One of the most spectacular sights I ever witnessed in feeding martins and swallows occurred over a city park in a small Midwestern town. A late-summer thunderstorm and cold front brought on a large hatch of lake flies—a type of midge. The setting sun, almost touching the horizon, back-lit the hazy scene, revealing a literal veil of insects on which thousands of martins, swallows, chimney swifts and over 200 night hawks were feeding.

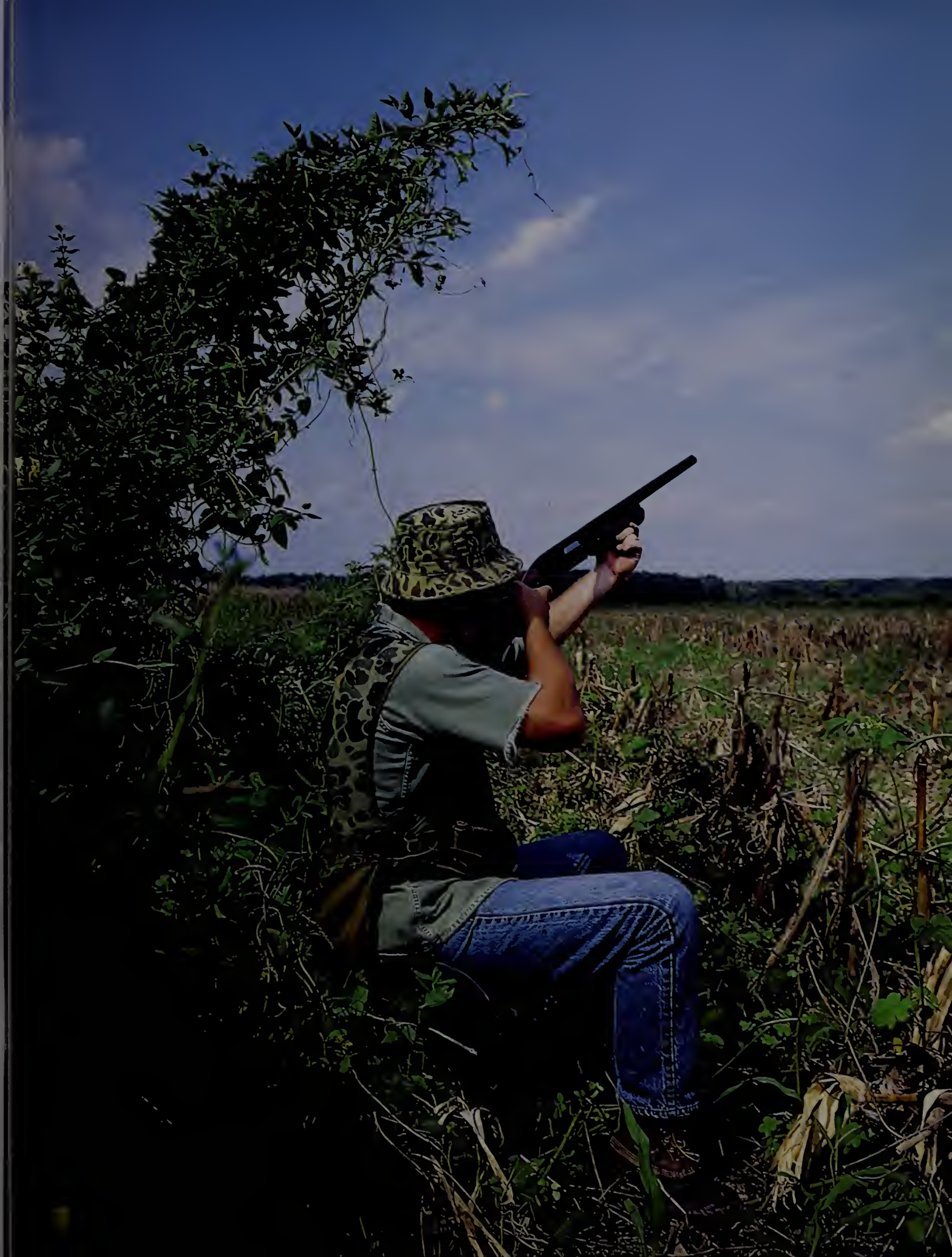
Martins and swallows must eat constantly on their diet of insects, and are generally tied to the land masses when they migrate. Most of them will travel

to the Gulf Coast, then to Mexico; then down into Central America and South America. Only a few traverse the large expanses of open water on flights to Cuba and the West Indies.

I first became aware of how spectacular a swallow migration could be one September on Lake Winnebago's eastern shore. I had noticed what I thought was a small flock of tree swallows milling about, feeding on a recent midge fly hatch. It appeared as if it were the same flock feeding there for hours. Then I happened to watch one bird, swooping, circling and diving. It moved on in a southerly direction, ultimately flying out of sight. I picked up on another bird and it too flew out of sight. Now I could picture the whole panorama. What I had determined was one small flock feeding around the area, was in reality a tremendously huge moving mass of tree swallows migrating leisurely southward. For two days or more, what must have been tens of thousands of swallows flew past that point. Every year now I watch for the gathering of the swallows, one of the first hints of fall. □

photo by Spike Knuth





National Hunting & Fishing Day
September 25, 1988

